

# EXEMPLARS OF EMINENCE EXCELLENCE



## WORLD CLASS KNOWLEDGE & SKILLS

- + One Class-Wide Service Learning Project
- + Hygiene / Wellness Course Completion
- + Community Service Hour (4 Hours)
- + One Group Project Based Learning Experience
- + Successful Completion of S.P.A.R.C. Team Goals
- + One Oral Presentation to Class / Community



## COLLEGE & CAREER READINESS

- + 80% Mastery of all Common Core Standards for Math and Reading
- + Grade Level DARR Reading Achievement
- + Grade Level Growth on MAP Testing
- + Learning Style / Interest / Career Inventory Completion
- + Monthly Career Day and Research Participation
- + Basic Knowledge of School, Vocational, and College Systems and Prerequisites

## NEXT GENERATION SKILLS

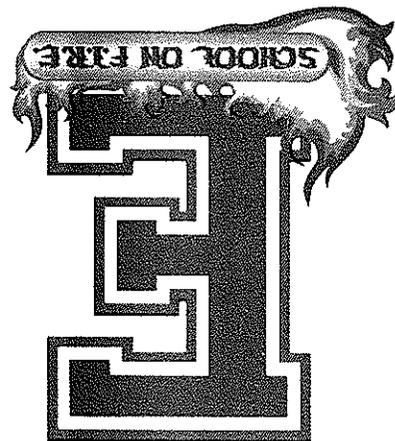
- + Create Digital Audio Books through Audio Capture
- + Basic tablet / laptop / pocket technology skills
- + Participation in Video Tele-Conferences (min. 4)
- + Regular usage of personalized I.C.E. apps for tablets
- + Create a presentation utilizing slides, transitions, embedding graphics, text boxes
- + Basic Back Channeling Skills (Silent Conversation)
- + Create a commercial using basic video editing software



# EXEMPLARS OF EMINENCE EXCELLENCE

## WORLD CLASS KNOWLEDGE & SKILLS

- + Panel Review Defense of Elementary Competency
- + One Service Learning Project
- + One Club / Sport / Activity Per Year
- + 10 Hours of Community Service
- + One Student Initiated Project Based Learning Experience
- + Successful Completion of F.I.R.E. Team Goals



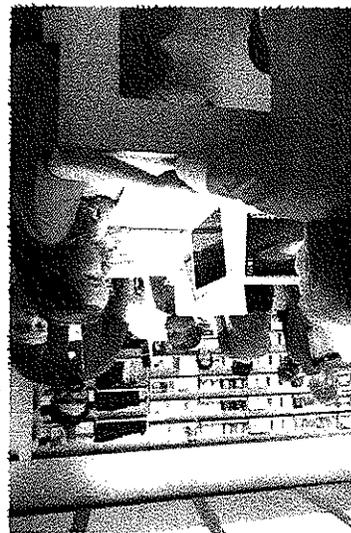
## COLLEGE & CAREER READINESS

- + KPREP Proficiency or Better on Mathematics (Grade 4)\*
- + KPREP Proficiency or Better on Reading (Grade 4)\*
- + KPREP Proficiency or Better on Science (Grade 4)\*
- + One College Campus Visit
- + Updated Individual Learning Plan (I.L.P.)
- + Internship in a Career Field Identified by I.L.P.
- + 80% Mastery of all Standards for Mathematics and Reading

*\*Students not meeting proficiency on KPREP Content Strands can meet Proficiency through annual growth objectives on MAP testing.*

## NEXT GENERATION SKILLS

- + Completion of On-Demand Performance Based Assessment
- + Flipped and Blended Classroom Experience
- + Student Digital Portfolio Documenting USAGE of Web 2.0 Tools
- Backchannel
- Collaborative Documents
- Digital Note-Taking
- Interactive Digital Storybooks
- Virtual Surveys
- Blogging
- Video / Audio Editing
- Video Conferencing
- Spreadsheets
- Screen, Audio, and Video Capturing



# EXEMPLARS OF EMINENCE EXCELLENCE

## WORLD CLASS KNOWLEDGE & SKILLS

- + Panel Review Defense of Middle School Competency
- + One Service Learning Project
- + Two Clubs / Sports / Activities For Middle School
- + 30 Hours of Community Service
- + One Student Initiated Project Based Learning Experience
- + Successful Completion of F.I.R.E. Team Goals



## COLLEGE & CAREER READINESS

+ KPREP Proficiency or Better on Mathematics (Grade 7)\*

+ KPREP Proficiency or Better on Reading (Grade 7)\*

+ KPREP Proficiency or Better on Science (Grade 7)\*

+ KPREP Proficiency or Better on Social Studies (Grade 7)\*

+ Updated Individual Learning Plan (I.L.P.)

+ Internship in a Career Field Identified by I.L.P.

+ 80% Mastery of all Standards for Mathematics and Reading

+ Creation of Digital Portfolio for College and Career Readiness

*\*Students not meeting proficiency on KPREP Content Strands can meet Proficiency through annual growth objectives on MAP testing.*



## NEXT GENERATION SKILLS

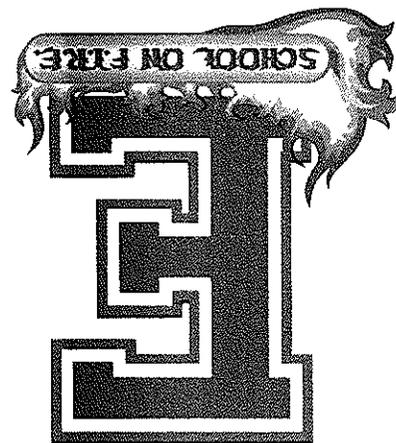
- + Flipped, Blended, and Virtual Classroom Experience
- + Completion of Student Digital Driver's License
- + Completion of On-Demand Performance Based Assessment
- + Student Digital Portfolio Documenting MASTERY of Web 2.0 Tools
- Backchannel
- Collaborative Documents
- Digital Note Taking
- Spreadsheets
- Presentation Software
- Blogging
- Interactive Digital Storybooks
- Virtual Surveys
- Video / Audio Editing
- Video Conferencing
- Screen, Audio, and Video Capturing



# EXEMPLARS OF EMINENCE EXCELLENCE

## WORLD CLASS KNOWLEDGE & SKILLS

- + Panel Review Defense of High School Competency
- + One Service Learning Project
- + Four Clubs / Sports / Activities For High School
- + 60 Hours of Community Service
- + One Student Initiated Project Based Learning Experience
- + Successful Completion of F.I.R.E. Team Goals



## COLLEGE & CAREER READINESS

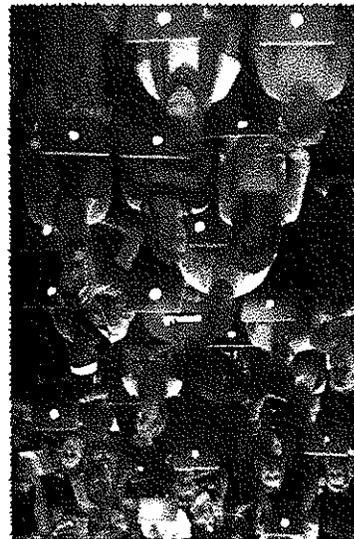
- + College Readiness for Mathematics (ACT: 19)\*
- + College Readiness for English (ACT: 18)\*
- + College Readiness for Reading (ACT: 20)\*
- + Successful Completion of College & Career Readiness Portfolio
- + Updated Individual Learning Plan (I.L.P.)
- + Three College Credit Hours or Passing Industry Certification
- + 80% Mastery of all Standards for Mathematics and Reading
- + Internship Analysis of Career Fields

*\*Students not meeting College Readiness on ACT Benchmarks can meet Career Readiness through completion of Industry Certification and Career Pathway Completions.*

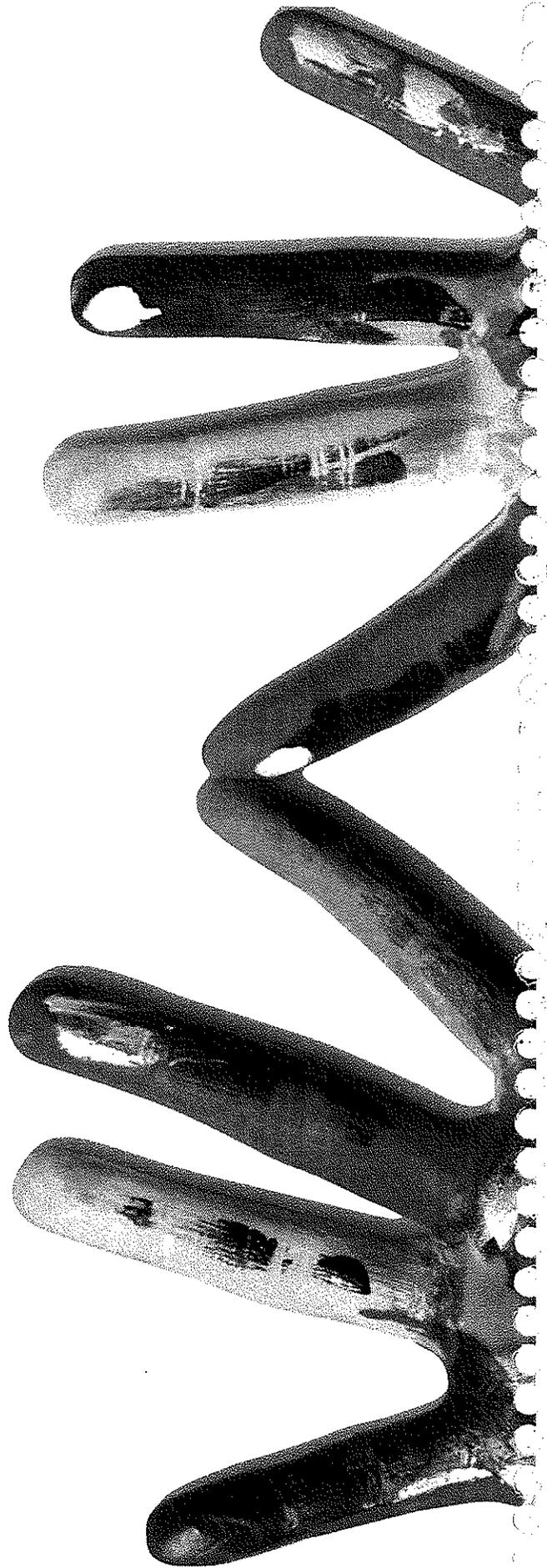
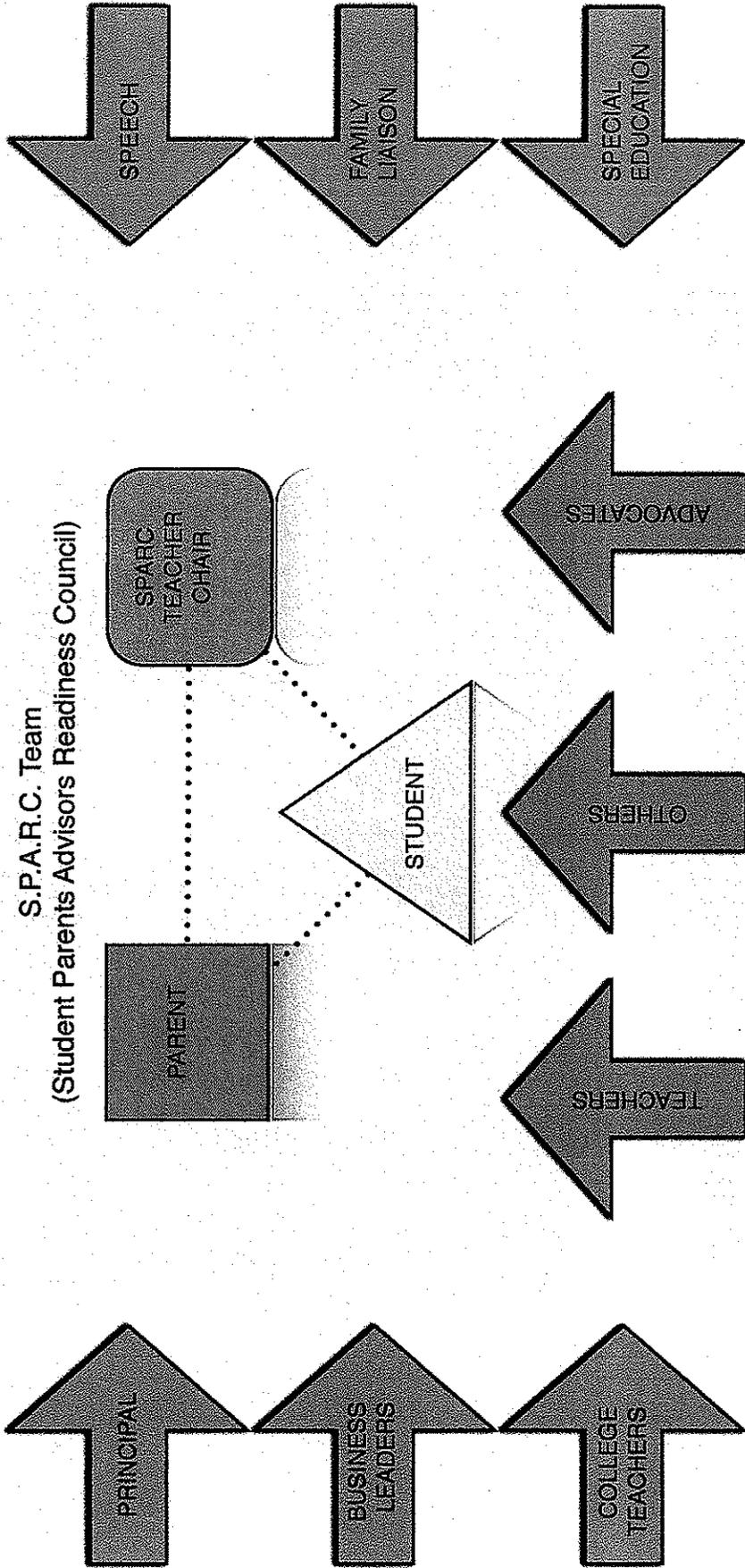


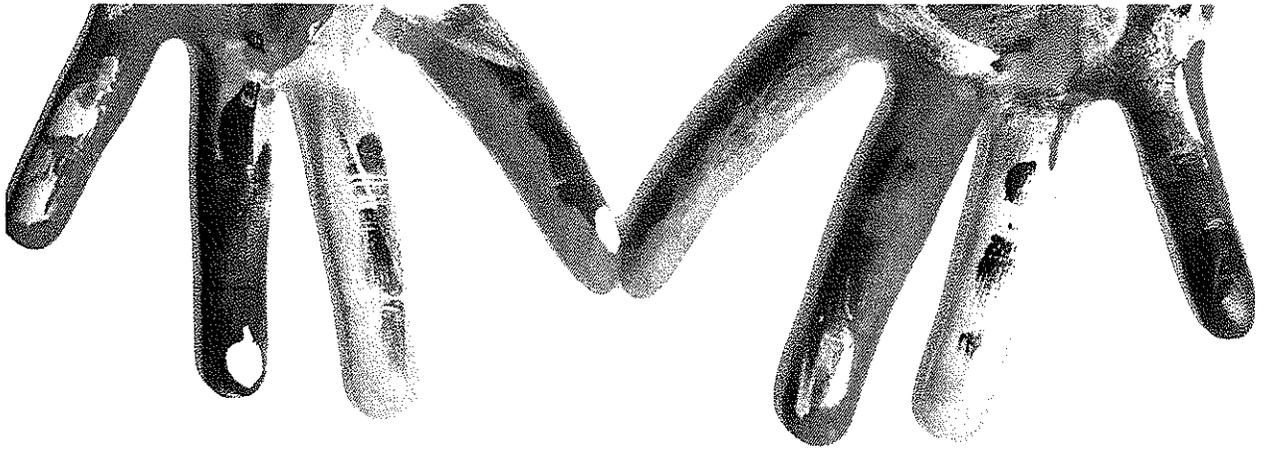
## NEXT GENERATION SKILLS

- + Completion of On-Demand Performance Based Assessment
- + Flipped, Blended, and Virtual Classroom Experience
- + Completion of Digital Skills Portfolio
- + All Students Will Use Collaborative Document Suites
- + Senior Project Will Include Next Generation Production Tools
- + Students Will Produce Content for National Distribution
- + Students Will Keep Good Standing for Digital Driver's License
- + Students Will Be Able to completely Construct, Create, or Consume Content.



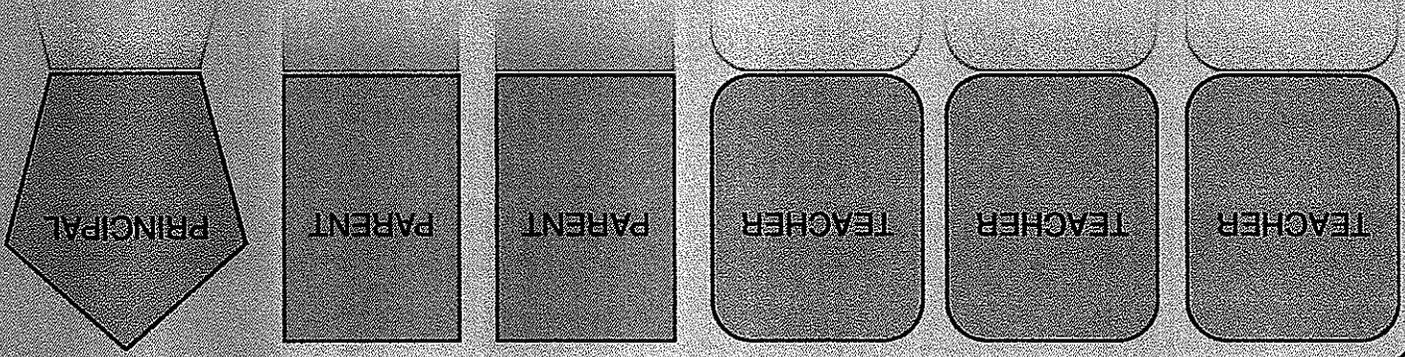
S.P.A.R.C. Team  
(Student Parents Advisors Readiness Council)



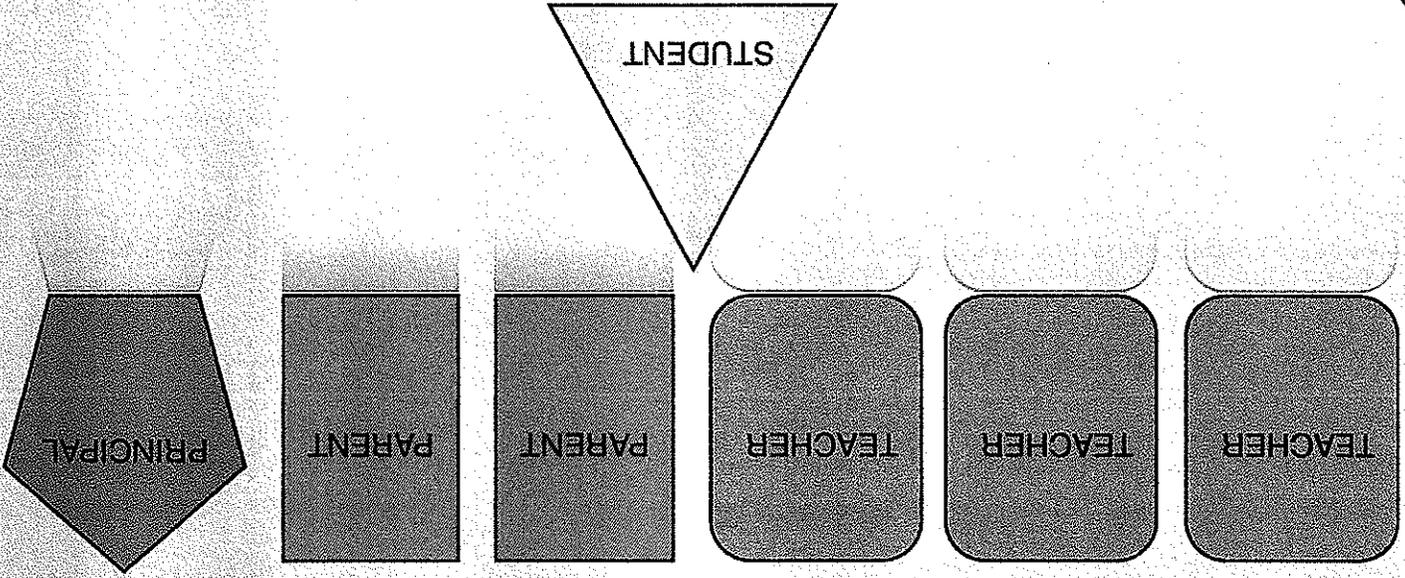


EMINENCE INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS SBDM REALIGNMENT PROPOSAL

CURRENT STRUCTURE



PROPOSED STRUCTURE



**Eminence High School  
School on F.I.R.E.  
Class Offerings**

**KEY:**

(T) = Traditional  
 (V) = Virtual [E-School]  
 (C) = Competency Based Credit  
 (D) = Dual Credit  
 (BU) = Bellarmine University  
 (JCC) = Jefferson Community College  
 (Adv) = Advanced  
 (E) = Eminence Site  
 (AP) = Advanced Placement

<b>English (4 Credits)</b>	<b>Mathematics (4 Credits)</b>	<b>Social Studies (3 Credits)</b>	<b>Science (3 Credits)</b>	<b>Health and P.E. (.5) and (.5)</b>	<b>Visual Performing Arts</b>
English I (T / C / V)	Algebra I (T / C / V)	World Civilization (T / C / V)	Intro to Science (T / C / V)	P.E. (T / C / V)	Humanities (T / C / V)
English II (T / C / V)	Geometry (T / C / V)	Government (T / C / V)	Biology (T / C / V)	Health (T / C / V)	Art Appreciation (V)
English III (T / C / V)	Algebra II (T / C / V)	U.S. History (T / C / V / D) (D: BU / AP)	Chemistry (T / C / V / D) (D: BU / AP)	Advanced P.E. (T / C)	Music Appreciation (V)
English IV (T / C / V)	Senior Math (T / C / V)	Geography (D / V / T) (D: BU / JCC)	Physics (V / D) (D: BU / AP)	Lifetime Wellness (T / C / V)	Band / Adv. Band (T / C)
English 101 (D: BU / JCC / V / E)	Pre-Calculus (T / C / V / D) (D: BU)	Sociology (D / V / T) (D: BU / JCC)	Independent Study (C)	Independent Study (C)	Art / Adv. Art (T / C)
English 102 (D: BU / JCC / V / E)	AP Calculus (T / C / V / D) (D: AP / BU)	Psychology (D / V / T) (D: BU / JCC)			Chorus (T / C)
AP Language (D: V)	College Algebra 1 (D: BU / JCC / V)	AP Microeconomics (V)			Independent Study (C)
AP Literature (D: V)	College Algebra 2 (D: BU / JCC / V)	AP Macroeconomics (V)			

Additional Electives	Career Ready 101 (C / V)	Design Thinking Lab (C / V)
Spanish 1,2,3, AP (T / D / V) (D: BU)	Social Marketing (T / C / V)	School to Work / Career Internships (Any / All Major Fields) (C)
French 1, 2 (V)	Real World Mathematics (T / C / V)	Independent Study (C)
Mandarin Chinese 1, 2 (V)	Pre-Engineering (T / C / V)	Yearbook (T / C / V)
Latin 1, 2, 3, AP (T / V)	Community Based Problem Solving (T / C / V)	STLP (T / C)
German 1, 2, 3 (V)	Digital Journalism (T / C / V)	Drama (T / C / V)
<b>BE Ready:</b> All College Course Offerings <i>(Pre-Requisites must be met if required.)</i>	<b>JCC:</b> Full Course Offerings On-Site at JCC-Shelby Full Course Offerings Virtually Limited Course Offerings at Eminence	<b>Vocational:</b> Full Course Offerings and Industrial Certifications per availability and partnerships with Shelby ATC, Spencerian, Ivy Tech, Virtual, and any other additional pathways or partnerships developed.

Students and their SPARC Teams can also create competency based credits individually per student gifts, opportunities, and experiences. Virtual and competency credits can be obtained on a year-round, anytime basis including nights, weekends, intercessions, or from home. Students can create a pathway that weaves in and out of any vocational program, college course offering, or content learning preference. This list isn't meant to be all inclusive of offerings, but simply a sample representation.

### Eminence Independent Schools - Districts of Innovation Timeline - Start Dates

	SP12	SP13	SU13	FA13	SP14	SU14	FA14	SP15	SU15	FA15
Mastery Model	F									
ICE	P			F						
Students on SBDM				F						
Gradeless ICE				P			F			
Personalized Pathways				P			F			
Student Advocates			F							
SPARC Teams			P				P			
Year 13 and Year 14							P			F
Incentivize PGES							F			
Examples of Learning Experiences										
Virtual High School				F						
Competency Courses										P
Student DNA					P		F			
24/7 - 365 Learning				P			F			
SPARC - P, G, S, S										
MAGES Program - MS							P			F
Stds. Based Report Cards				P			F			
VOICE Teams	P			F						
New Structures										
Reinvented Non-Traditional	F									

**P = Partially Implemented**  
**F = Fully Implemented**  
*Start Date = Start of Color*

## Innovation Implementation Map

### *Eminence Independent Schools*

Evaluation and Implementation of New Innovative Instructional Strategies (Classroom / School Level)					
Level One	Level Two	Level Three	Level Four	Level Five	Level Six
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>District / School Administration Teams determines the merit and applicability of the innovation through district's mission, vision, resources, and teachers.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expose teachers from the VOICE Team to the innovation and solicit model classes for the innovation.</li> <li>Teachers will receive training and support for the new innovative concept.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teachers will collaborate with one non-VOICE team teacher to create a collaboration team for implementation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>VOICE Team will review effectiveness of the new innovation through teacher and student surveys and growth.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>After the strategy is evaluated, full scale-up potential will be determined.</li> <li>Necessary funding will be allocated.</li> <li>Planning and professional development needs will be established.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Scalability will occur either within a team / school / or the district as a whole.</li> <li>Monitoring will occur through walkthrough data.</li> </ul>

**Innovation Implementation Map**  
*Emmence Independent Schools*

Evaluation and Implementation of New Innovative Instructional Strategies (District level)					
Level One	Level Two	Level Three	Level Four	Level Five	Level Six
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>District Administration Teams and the Board of Education determines the merit and applicability of the innovation through district's mission, vision, and resources.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Data of the new innovation, waiver, or accountability model will be reviewed for current examples or systems.</li> <li>Discussion with other Districts of Innovation will determine feasibility and applicability of the innovation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discussion with the Kentucky Department of Education will occur to see if there is any necessary waivers, administrative procedures, or exemptions necessary for the innovation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Board of Education's legal council will review the innovation with respect to current policies and procedures to determine necessary changes for implementation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Board of Education and/or the SBDM will then vote to change and necessary policies and procedures critical for innovation to take place.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Data will be compiled and compared to baseline data to determine effectiveness of the new innovation.</li> </ul>



**SUMMARY/  
OVERVIEW  
OF SCHOOL PLAN  
DEVELOPMENT**

# Summary/Overview of School Plan Development:

## Competency Based Credit:

The Eminence plan is rooted in mastery learning. Eminence was one of the first schools in the country to adopt a "B or better" policy requiring students to achieve an 80% or better to earn credit for a course. A student's grade is standards based in Eminence, representing the assessments and projects that demonstrate mastery of the standards. The Eminence mastery model has long included building in multiple opportunities for students to demonstrate mastery including offering retakes for assessments until mastery is demonstrated. Setting a high bar for success and allowing students extended time is a part of the fabric of Eminence Independent Schools.



*Fox News Story: B or Better*

The Eminence District of Innovation plan seeks to build upon this culture by moving to a competency based system that is not dependent on time. In year one of the plan, our staff will be trained in the principles of competency based learning and create rigorous competencies for each course. The University of Kentucky's School of Education has agreed to partner with Eminence to provide feedback on the competency based courses and measures of mastery created by Eminence staff. This could potentially be done in collaboration with other districts of innovation if other districts are interested in offering these courses. Throughout the first year of as a district of innovation, Eminence would create the assessments, projects, course requirements and demonstrations of mastery required for each course. By year two, the core classes at Eminence High School will be offered to students in a competency based format. Students will have the opportunity to demonstrate course competencies at any time and earn credit for a course. This will allow students taking a competency based course to self-pace and focus in on the standards that they need in order to progress. The teacher role would shift to more of a facilitator/coach role rather than the distributor of information. Even the hours teachers work could be impacted, as we want to make teachers available during non "school hours" both virtually and face to face to provide support to students as needed.

The learning objectives for each course will come directly from the Common Core standards as well as the ACT standards. These objectives will lead to the creation of a combination of assessments, writing assignments, projects, performance events and rubrics that will be used to measure the objectives.

Eminence students will be able to personalize their learning pathway in a way that few students across the country are able to do. The concepts of seat time and waiting on the teacher will begin to fade. The required competencies for each course will be outlined and provided to students. The student will take ownership of the competencies and partner with Eminence staff to have the support they need to demonstrate the competencies. Some students may choose to accelerate their learning and work at a faster pace, perhaps earning credit for a course prior to the end of a school year. Once they have demonstrated the competencies for the course, the student will earn credit and begin another course. With the requirements for students to sit in a class for 170 six hour days and to start courses only at the beginning of a semester or year removed, students will have the freedom to personalize their learning progression.

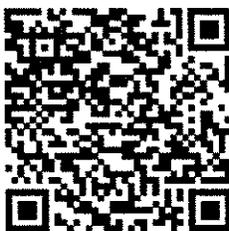
Student voice is a launching point for competency based learning. In collaboration with their staff assigned advisor, students will select the path they choose in each of their courses. Students could choose a traditional course, a competency based course, or an online course for each credit. Students will meet with their advisor and parent to establish goals at the beginning of each year and again for meetings to monitor progress. Students will meet bi-weekly with their advisor for regular check ins, progress monitoring and support.

Individual learning needs of each student will be supported through the student's advisor. Each student will have an Individual Learning Plan outlining their needs, learning styles, future plans and pathway to graduation. Multiple pathways such as the early college program ("B.E. Ready"), the virtual program ("eSchool"), competency based credit offerings, and traditional classes will be available to each student. In addition, the school's interventions Connections and Enrichment (I.C.E.) model will allow students built in time for interventions in the courses where they need additional assistance and exciting, project-based electives to Students will have the freedom in collaboration with their advisor to create a personal pathway by blending two or more offerings to best fit their needs.

## Expanded Learning Opportunities:

The Eminence District of Innovation Plan seeks to remove the barriers of time and location. Eminence's School On F.I.R.E. model, launched in May of 2012, removed barriers that allow us to provide learning opportunities beyond the traditional school day. Each student has been provided a MacBook Pro laptop. Currently, courses are taking advantage of Haiku, a Learning Management System (LMS). Course materials, assignments, discussions, threads and support resources are provided online to the student. Teachers have begun using either a flipped or blended model of instruction. The city of Eminence has plans to support the school's 1:1 initiative by

providing free wifi within the city-limits. Eminence converted a school bus into the state's first working wifi-equipped bus and is in the process of adding additional equipment to the wifi bus that will transform it into a mobile classroom.



Beyond a Bus Blog

Each of these steps has provided a foundation to pursue further expanded learning opportunities. Eminence seeks to offer an "Eminence eSchool" pathway which will allow students to take courses in a virtual environment. In addition, competency based courses will be developed in the first year of the project. Both initiatives will allow students the freedom to define when and where learning takes place. Students will no longer be bound to physical location and seat time requirements. Furthermore, a student can start and complete a course at any time. We will open up enrollment in courses in the summer so that students might take a virtual course when they are less busy.

Furthermore, Eminence plans to provide staffing to support learning beyond the traditional 185 day school schedule from 7:45-3:30. We plan to provide individuals who can support learning and provide instructional support in an after school setting and during breaks and summers. As students wish to pursue online and competency based credits or simply need assistance with work in the more traditional courses, staff will be available to provide support.

## Multiple Assessments/Pathways to Graduation:

Eminence Independent Schools believe wholeheartedly in personalizing pathways to graduation. Our plan is deeply rooted in providing a multitude of pathways, even in a high school that currently employs nine certified teachers.

"B.E. Ready!" Pathway: Eminence launched the "B.E. Ready!" early college pathway at the start of the 2012-13 school year. Students making qualifying ACT scores can take classes two days per week on Bellarmine University's campus. These students are able to earn 12 credit hours a year from Bellarmine, some of which count as dual credit courses toward high school graduation. 22% of EHS students participated in the "B.E. Ready!" cohort 1. Students choosing this pathway could earn up to 36 hours from in three years along with their high school credits. They will graduate Eminence as a Bellarmine sophomore. By providing flexibility in the master schedule, Eminence has gone beyond simply offering college courses in high school and allowed students to

experience real college courses on a college campus. The "B.E. Ready!" program has become the premier early college model in the state.

Bellarmine Story



*Eminence School Pathway:* Eminence will offer the Eminence School pathway beginning in the 2013-14 school year. These students will have the opportunity to take their courses in a virtual setting and take advantage of the Eminence support network on an as needed basis. The pilot for this project began in 2012-13, primarily for foreign language offerings as well as course recovery. Eminence will offer a full spectrum of courses virtually, making it possible for students to earn every high school graduation credit online. Eminence School students would still take the appropriate End of Course assessments, PLAN and ACT just as any other high school student in the state of Kentucky. We wish to be able to compare our students in non traditional pathways using the same measures as other schools. The school pathway is designed for students who wish to be on a nontraditional schedule and want to progress at their own pace.

The Eminence School may appeal to students who wish to work at their own pace, Another group that would be drawn to the Eminence school is the homeschool population, students who have chosen not to attend public schools but who may find they are missing out on some of the things public school can offer. The school would offer them a complete high school curriculum and allow them to earn a high school diploma while working at home. If the student was interested in art, band or other extra curricular activities, or if they wanted a face to face class in a content they struggle in, they could attend a course on the Eminence campus as needed.

*Competency Based Pathway:* Beginning with the 2014-15 school year, Eminence students will be able to take any Eminence core course as a competency based credit. The courses will be developed by Eminence staff in collaboration with other willing District of Innovation partners during the 2013-14 school year. Students choosing this pathway will be given a set of competency based assignments, assessments, projects, and/or performance events. Eminence will partner with the University of Kentucky's P20 Next Generation Leadership Academy to develop the competency based courses. The University of Kentucky will provide quality assurances for each of the courses prior to Eminence offering the course to students.

*Eminence Vocational Pathway:* Eminence will work with a variety of collaborative partners to develop unlimited vocational pathways based on student interests and goals

established in SPARC (Student/Parent/Advisors Readiness Consultation) teams. For instance, if a student's SPARC team identifies nursing or automotive technician as a future career interest, the team would then begin creating a pathway for that student beginning as early as elementary school. In elementary and middle school, it may mean establishing job shadowing experiences or incorporating the professional goals into service projects for the Exemplars of Excellence. By the end of middle school the SPARC team will identify or create a pathway to graduation that best meets the needs of the students. This may mean partnering with a vocational or technical school to provide instruction leading to a certification for the student. The SPARC team would develop internship and/or work-study opportunities for the student.

## **Innovative Learning Environment:**

Most schools begin by creating a system and retrofit the student into the system. At the heart of the Eminence model is student agency. We begin with the individual student and build a personalized pathway around each student. If we do not have a pathway that fits a student, we will use our SPARC team to create the pathway for a student. Eminence will partner with local businesses to provide apprenticeships, internships, and work study opportunities as needed. Eminence classes can be taken as competency based, online, or blended. Students will have the opportunity to complete high school early and enter the early college "B.E. Ready!" program or stay two additional years beyond their twelfth grade year and begin taking college courses under the Eminence support network. No longer will time be the constant. Students will be able to take courses during intercessions and summer. Students will have access to staff during evening hours. We will design pathways that fit the student.

## **Alternative Forms of Governance:**

Eminence would like to add student member to the SBDM council bringing the total voting members of the council to seven members. The elected student members would be full voting members with the exception of closed session personnel decisions. We desire to create a governance in which students have a true voice and vote. In addition, Eminence will continue to utilize and empower the Student Voice to be active change agents. The Student voice team meets regularly with district administration to discuss areas for improvement. The students then take ownership of the issues and formulate action plans to address issues important to them.

Finally, Eminence will continue to have regular meetings with the Teacher V.O.I.C.E. (Vision of Innovative Classroom Excellence) team. Teachers apply each year to be a part of the team. They meet both face to face and virtually to explore new and innovative ideas to reinvent education.

Throughout the duration of our "District of Innovation" status, Eminence will continue to utilize the school SBDM councils, Student Voice team, and Teacher V.O.I.C.E. team to filter new ideas. Each of these groups, in addition to the Board of Education, will have

input and provide feedback as we consider new layers to the plan to innovate and reinvent schools.

## Job Classifications:

The current role of teachers and instructional assistants will need to evolve over the duration of the "District of Innovation" status. We envision the possibility of creating roles such as diagnosticians, learning coaches and master teachers. The redefinition of the teacher role is an area of innovation we would like to explore with our Teacher V.O.I.C.E. team.

Emminence would like to provide opportunities for teachers to work alternative schedules. For instance, some teachers may work from 7-3 while others work from 9-5. We may explore making staff available on weekends and intercessions, either as stipend pay or as a part of their schedule.

Emminence would like to begin by creating opportunities for both classified and instructional assistants to provide some small group instruction. We would like to see classroom teachers create small mini lessons that can be facilitated and led by other district personnel.

Emminence will work with the University of Kentucky's School of Education to create a learning lab on site for education majors. We will create opportunities for UK students to provide instructional support to our students. Eminence is exploring the possibility of providing partial/full scholarships to the UK students who participate in the program. UK is exploring creating a field based credit for the student.

Emminence will explore compensating our staff for development of competency based and flipped courses.

Emminence is open to exploring changing the current pay scale. The new pay scale would be based on the Teacher Professional Growth Evaluation System rather than salary increases for years of service, allowing all teachers increase their earnings based on performance. This step will be considered after piloting the TPGES in 2013-14.

## Other:

The Exemplars of Eminence Excellence (E<sup>3</sup>) set a high bar for all Eminence students. The E<sup>3</sup> outline goals that must be met at each grade level (K-12) to achieve the distinction in three areas: World Class Knowledge and Skills, College and Career Readiness, and Next Generation Skills. This framework is a catalyst in developing world class students. Not only does the E<sup>3</sup> framework set a high bar for academic expectations, it also establishes goals for things such as community service, individual goals and next generation skills.

Our mission is to develop students beyond a mastery of the standards. We have set forth to define what a world class student is at each grade level and defined those expectations. Through a variety of intentional experiences we will create students that are prepared for college and career.

By the end of high school Eminence students will take an on demand performance based assessment where they will work with a group to solve a problem all while demonstrating their proficiency using technology.

At the conclusion of 5th, 8th and 12th grade an Eminence student will present a defense of their knowledge to a panel of community leaders, parents and staff.



**STUDENT  
SERVICE  
PLAN**



## Eminence Independent Schools – Districts of Innovation – Student Service Plan

Eminence Independent Schools District-Wide Application Grades K-12				School Demographics									
District	School	Grades	# of Participating Educators	Numbers							Percentages		
				# of Participating Students (estimates)	# of Participating high-need students	# of Participating low-income students	Total # of low-income students	Total # of Students in the School	% of Participating Students in the School	% of Participating students from low-income families	% of School		
Eminence Independent Schools	<i>Eminence Elementary School</i>	K-5	15	306	30	185	163	306	100%	60%	100%		
Eminence Independent Schools	<i>Eminence Middle / High School</i>	6-12	17	335	36	174	174	335	100%	52%	100%		

# SUPPORT PLAN



*District of Innovation Professional Development Plan:  
Eminence Independent Schools*

<b>2013-14 Professional Development</b>	<b>Measurable Goals/ Outcomes</b>	<b>Evidence</b>	<b>Desired Impact On Student Learning</b>
<p>•SPARC Teams will be trained in SMART Goal setting, personalization, maximizing partnerships, available assistance, using student interests, monitoring growth in MAP, updating/ authenticating ILPs, and leveraging resources.</p>	<p>Each SPARC team will meet twice a year with a minimum of monthly contact with all stakeholders.</p>	<p>SPARC Teams will keep a digital log/portfolio of student goals, interests, learning styles, discussions, etc.</p>	<p>Providing each student with a team of advocates will assist the school in personalizing their learning experience.</p>
<p>•Personalizing instruction training based on student interests, content mastery, interventions, connections, enrichments, time, and skills.</p>	<p>Two full days of personalizing learning PD days in year one. Monthly discussions through PLC sharing.</p> <p>Virtual PLC through Edmodo for sharing failures and successes.</p>	<p>Create a digital database of personalized learning resources and a depository of ideas, lessons, examples.</p> <p>Walkthrough data on student engagement and differentiation.</p> <p>Eminence will monitor student growth and proficiency percentages via MAP, KPREP, EPAS and End of Course assessments.</p> <p>In addition, Eminence will monitor the percentage of students at each grade level that have achieved the Exemplars of Eminence Excellence at each grade level.</p>	<p>Increased student growth and proficiency percentages are the desired impact on student learning. It is our belief that personalizing instruction to meet specific student needs in a timely fashion will have a dramatic impact on student achievement.</p> <p>The percentage of students at each grade level earning the Exemplars of Eminence Excellence will increase.</p>

*District of Innovation Professional Development Plan:  
Eminence Independent Schools*

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• District will provide professional development for all teachers in grades 6-12 on competency based learning.</li> <li>• Eminence High School will establish PLCs focused on the creation of Competency Based Courses. PLC groups will be formed in content groups and headed by an administrator (Buddy Berry-Math, Thom Coffee-ELA, Shannon Treece-Social Studies/ Science). CBL-PLCs will collaborate throughout the year, both in face to face and virtual collaboration to create the competencies for courses that will begin with the 2014-15 school year. The University of Kentucky will partner for feedback on validity of competency based courses.</li> </ul>	<p>Competency Based Credit courses will be developed for the following classes and be available to students beginning in the 2014-15 school year:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ENG 8,9,10,11,12</li> <li>• 8th grade math</li> <li>• Algebra 1, Algebra 2, Geometry</li> <li>• World History</li> <li>• Chemistry</li> </ul>	<p>Sign in sheet and participant evaluation/ feedback for CBL training sessions.</p> <p>Teacher created competency based course materials with peer, administrator and student voice team feedback.</p>	<p>Competency based courses will allow students to demonstrate mastery at the point of readiness and to move through courses at their own pace.</p> <p>The initiative supports Eminence's belief in mastery learning.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Train staff in maximizing virtual classes. Evaluate online provider while supplementing with Eminence Exemplars and Gaps from the Common Core</li> </ul>	<p>Create a virtual diploma with access to our Eminence staff when needed.</p>	<p>Purchase a online virtual core program and create Eminence supplemental materials.</p>	<p>Promote anytime/anywhere learning allowing students choice in the method/delivery of instruction to suit their learning styles and needs.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• District will provide continued support for the implementation of Standards Based Report Cards.</li> </ul>	<p>Grades K-12 will launch SBRC beginning in 2013-4.</p>	<p>SBRC documents Parent and student survey feedback</p>	<p>Clear identification and communication of specific standards will promote intentional goal setting and growth targets for each individual student.</p>

*District of Innovation Professional Development Plan:  
Eminence Independent Schools*

<p>•Continue meetings with the Teacher VOICE (Vision of Innovative Classroom Excellence) team. Members will apply for the 2013-14 school year based on an expressed interest in exploring Project Based Learning. This will include book studies, training from certified PBL experts and site visits to classrooms using PBL. Currently, three teachers in Eminence are utilizing PBL.</p>	<p>100% of VOICE Team members will explore Project Based Learning and other ideas for innovation in their classroom. (see Innovation Implementation Map)</p> <p>100% of VOICE Team members will develop PBL units for their classroom.</p>	<p>Agendas and minutes from Teacher VOICE team.</p> <p>Model classrooms established.</p> <p>Evidence of teacher created PBL experiences from the 2013-14 school year.</p>	<p>The VOICE team will lay the groundwork for scaling up PBL throughout the district in subsequent years.</p> <p>PBL will increase student engagement and promote students who are critical thinkers, collaborators and can produce products using the skills and knowledge they are learning.</p>
<p>•Provide training to newly elected student voice team members in Student Aspirations work, modeled after the work of Student Engagement Trust. Students will be trained in how to collect data and develop action plans in response to data. Aspirations work will enable students to become both dreamers and doers, taking an active role in school improvement.</p>	<p>Student Voice team will develop, conduct, analyze results of a Student Voice survey.</p> <p>Student Voice team will create and implement a plan of action in response to the survey data.</p>	<p>Minutes from Student Voice Meetings</p> <p>Reflection/analysis of student voice survey</p> <p>Student created action plans and evidence of implementation.</p>	<p>Students will be active change agents, empowered to take action to address the issues that concern them.</p> <p>We want to develop students' abilities to solve problems without clear answers in a collaborative setting.</p>
<p>•Provide a menu of opportunities for professional development in the usage of various web 2.0 tools. These "Snack and Mac" sessions are led by Eminence staff and students and open to both students and staff.</p>	<p>Promote continued learning about and adaptation of web 2.0 tools.</p> <p>Increase staff and student comfort level with new technology tools.</p>	<p>PD menu, sign in sheets and agendas from "Snack and Mac" sessions.</p> <p>Walkthrough data on student and teacher technology usage.</p> <p>Regular share out during staff meetings and PLCs highlighting the usage of technology in the classroom.</p>	<p>Equip students and teachers with a wide array of web 2.0 tools to add to their toolbox.</p> <p>Students and teachers will be able to use a variety of tools to accomplish curricular goals.</p>

*District of Innovation Professional Development Plan:  
Eminence Independent Schools*

<b>2014-15 Professional Development</b>	<b>Measurable Goals/ Outcomes</b>	<b>Evidence</b>	<b>Desired Impact On Student Learning</b>
<p>• District will provide professional development for all teachers in grades K-12 in project-based learning with respect to Design Thinking with Teacher V.O.I.C.E. team members taking a lead role in providing mentoring and model classroom sites.</p>	<p>Each teacher at each grade level will provide a minimum of one PBL experience during the 2013-14 school year.</p>	<p>Evidence binder will contain evidence of PBL experience, student work and reflections from teachers and students for each grade level and content area.</p>	<p>All students in grades K-12 will be exposed to Project Based Learning. Students will work collaboratively to solve problems that do not have one clear answer.</p>

*District of Innovation Professional Development Plan:  
Eminence Independent Schools*

The professional development plan for subsequent years of District of Innovation status will be created as the district monitors progress of the first year. We are unable to project exactly what professional development needs will be until we gauge the progress of the first year of implementation. Eminence's professional development plan will be a fluid document that will grow and develop throughout the duration of DOI distinction.

Eminence Independent Schools will utilize the Teacher V.O.I.C.E. team, SBDM councils, Eminence Board of Education and the district leadership team to monitor the goals during the first year and plan for professional development needs for future years.

In addition, we are fully aware that our plan is a start and is likely to change as we are exposed to new innovative ideas. We commit to review, consider and respond to new ideas as they arise. We will filter each new idea through the mission, vision and core values of Eminence Independent Schools. With each adaptation we will alter our professional development plan accordingly. Furthermore, Eminence will use our "Innovation Implementation Map" to measure the progress of each new initiative.

At this time we intend to scale up the implementation of Project Based Learning and Design Thinking from the VOICE team to district wide staff in 2014-15 school year and will plan for professional development in that area. Project Based Learning and Design Thinking will help us meet the needs of a diverse population of students. We intend to scale up these initiatives to district wide implementation in order to develop critical thinkers. We wish to create environments where students are driven by a real world purpose to learn content in order to produce meaningful products.

Additionally, we will provide professional development for any staff in newly created roles/positions that occur as a result of the implementation of our DOI application. As new roles are introduced or as current roles change, Eminence will provide professional development to help with the transition into new roles.

# EIS - DISTRICTS OF INNOVATION - COMMUNICATION PLAN

## COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES

	Students	Teachers	Parents	Community
District Website (events updates, calendar, contacts, etc.)	✓	✓	✓	✓
Email System Informational / Opportunities	✓	✓	✓	✓
Infinite Campus (grades, attendance, announcements, etc.)	✓	✓	✓	✓
Newsletters	✓	✓	✓	✓
Student DNA Access	✓	✓	✓	✓
Individual Learning Plans (ILPs)	✓	✓	✓	✓
Teacher Websites (assignments, projects, updates, etc.)	✓	✓	✓	✓
Surveys (VOICE / Agency / Service)	✓	✓	✓	✓

## Print

School Information Handouts / Send Homes	✓	✓	✓	✓
Standardized Test Results (ACT, SAT, CATS, MAP, PLAN, MAP / etc.)	✓	✓	✓	✓
Acceptable Code of Behavior	✓	✓	✓	✓
School Calendar	✓	✓	✓	✓
Teacher Manual	✓	✓	✓	✓
Student Handbook	✓	✓	✓	✓
Standards Based Report Cards	✓	✓	✓	✓
Progress Reports	✓	✓	✓	✓

## AV / Media

In-School Announcements	✓	✓	✓	✓
Phone Information Messages (One Call System)	✓	✓	✓	✓
Radio Announcements / Interviews (as needed)	✓	✓	✓	✓
Innovation Progress / Accomplishments (TV, paper, etc. - Boxcar Media)	✓	✓	✓	✓
Marquee Messages Highlighting Initiatives	✓	✓	✓	✓
Eminence Promotional and Informational Videos	✓	✓	✓	✓
Henry County Local Media Release / Advertise Community Forums	✓	✓	✓	✓

## Face-To-Face

Site-Based Decision Making (SBDM) Council Meetings	✓	✓	✓	✓
Board of Education Meetings	✓	✓	✓	✓
Staff Meetings	✓	✓	✓	✓
Professional Learning Communities (PLCs)	✓	✓	✓	✓
SPARC Team Meetings	✓	✓	✓	✓
Parent - Teacher Nights / Conferences	✓	✓	✓	✓
Community Forums	✓	✓	✓	✓
Home Visits	✓	✓	✓	✓
Open House Nights Exploring College and Career Pathways	✓	✓	✓	✓
College and Career Campus Visits	✓	✓	✓	✓
Club and Extra-Curricular Meetings / Events	✓	✓	✓	✓
Civic Awareness/Partnerships (Rotary, Chamber of Commerce, etc.)	✓	✓	✓	✓

Districts of Innovation

## Eminence Independent Schools – Districts of Innovation - Monitoring Plan

Eminence Independent Schools – Percentage of Students Earning Exemplars of Eminence Excellence at Each Grade Level							
Goal area	School	Baseline			Goals		
		2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17 (Post-DOD)
The Percentage of E <sup>3</sup> Students at Each Grade Level	All Schools	NA	40%	50%	60%	70%	80%

Eminence Independent Schools Summative Assessment Goals for Districts of Innovation							
Goal area	School	Baseline			Goals		
		2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17 (Post-DOD)
<b>Math PROFICIENCY:</b> Measured by the % of students at proficient or distinguished on <i>KPREP and EPAS (EXPLORE/PLAN/ACT) and EOC Algebra II (high school)</i>	MA Elementary: <b>KPREP OVERALL/ Free &amp; Reduced Lunch</b>  MA Middle: <b>KPREP OVERALL/ Free &amp; Reduced Lunch</b>  MA Middle School: % meeting <b>EXPLORE MA benchmark</b>	16.8%/14.7%  31.3%/28.3%  33.3%	33.4%/31.8%  45%/42.64%  46.6%	50.2%/48.8%  58.8%/57%  59.9%	66.9%/65.9%  72.5%/71.3%  73.2%	83.5%/82.9%  86.3%/85.7%  86.5%	100%/100%  100%/100%  100%

<b>Reading PROFICIENCY:</b> <i>Measured by the % of students at proficient or distinguished on KPREP (elementary/middle) and EOC English 10 (high school)</i>	MA High School: ALG II EOC <b>OVERALL/</b> <i>Free &amp; Reduced Lunch</i>		42.9%/NA	54.3%/54.3%	65.7%/65.7%	77.2%/77.2%	88.6%/88.6%	100%/100%
	MA High School % meeting PLAN MA benchmark		33.3%	46.6%	59.9%	73.2%	86.5%	100%
	MA High School % meeting ACT MA benchmark		41.4%	53.1%	64.8%	76.5%	88.2%	100%
	RD Elementary: KPREP <b>OVERALL/</b> <i>Free &amp; Reduced Lunch</i>		28%/20.6%	42.4%/36.5%	56.8%/52.4%	71.2%/68.2%	85.6%/84.1%	100%/100%
	RD Middle School: KPREP <b>OVERALL/</b> <i>Free &amp; Reduced Lunch</i>		48.8%/37.4%	59%/49.9%	69.3%/62.4%	79.5%/75%	89.8%/87.5%	100%/100%
	RD Middle: % meeting EXPLORE RD benchmark		41.7%	53.4%	65.1%	76.8%	88.5%	100%
	RD High School: EOC ENG 10 <b>OVERALL/</b> <i>Free &amp; Reduced Lunch</i>		66.7%/62.5%	73.4%/70%	80%/77.5%	86.7%/85%	93.4%/92.5%	100%/100%
	RD High School % meeting PLAN RD benchmark		50%	60%	70%	80%	90%	100%



**Eminence Independent Schools – Gap Growth Goals for Districts of Innovation**

Goal area	All Schools	Baseline					Goals				
		2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17 (Post-DOD)				
Gap score per K Y accountability	Reading	%PD	40.8%	45%	55%	65%	72%	80%			
	Mathematics	%PD	19.5%	25%	35%	40%	50%	60%			

**Eminence Independent Schools – Percentage of College and Career Ready Graduates for Districts of Innovation**

Goal area	School	Baseline(s)					Goals				
		2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17 (Post-DOD)			
College and Career Ready Percentage	EHS	39%	42%	72.6%	80%	90%	100%	100%			

**Eminence Independent Schools – Graduation Goals for Districts of Innovation**

Goal area	School	Baseline(s)					Goals				
		2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17 (Post-DOD)			
High school graduation rate	EHS	100%	76.2%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%			





# LETTERS OF SUPPORT



# ***Eminence Independent Schools***

(502) 845-4788  
Fax (502) 845-2339  
[www.eminence.kyschools.us](http://www.eminence.kyschools.us)



Board of Education  
291 W. Broadway  
Eminence, Kentucky 40019

## **Letters of Support**

### ***From Eminence Independent Schools:***

Mr. Buddy Berry, Superintendent, Eminence Independent Schools

Mr. Thom Coffee, Instructional Supervisor, Eminence Independent Schools

Ms. Shannon Treece, Principal, Eminence Middle/High School

Mr. Michael J. Doran, Principal, Eminence Elementary School

Ms. Stephanie Barrows, Special Education Teacher, Eminence High School

Mr. Jesse DeEsche, Student, Eminence High School

Ms. Ashley Perkins, President, Eminence PTSA

### ***From University Partners:***

Dr. Graham W. L. Ellis, Assistant Vice President for Academic Affairs, Bellarmine University

Dr. Mary John O'Hair, Dean, University of Kentucky's College of Education

Dr. Doris A. Tegart, Provost, Bellarmine University

Dr. Gerry Swan, Professor, University of Kentucky's P20 Innovation Lab

### ***From Community Partners:***

Mr. David Baird, Associate Executive Director, Kentucky School Board Association

Mr. John Logan Brent, Henry County Judge Executive

Mr. Drane Stephens, Mayor of Eminence

Ms. Tina B. Tipton, Chief Academic Officer/Deputy CEO, Ohio Valley Educational Cooperative

Dr. Deborah Walker, President and CEO, Collaborative for Teaching and Learning

Ms. Lynda Thomas, Manager of Professional Development and Distance Learning, KET

*Expect Eminence Excellence!*

# ***Eminence Independent Schools***

Board of Education  
291 W. Broadway  
Eminence, Kentucky 40019



(502) 845-4788  
Fax (502) 845-2339  
[www.eminence.kyschools.us](http://www.eminence.kyschools.us)

March 1, 2013

To Whom It May Concern,

As we've worked as a team to apply for the inaugural Districts of Innovation application, we have been exhausted and inspired by the resulting vision. We truly believe we have an application that will continue our journey of completely personalizing the K-12 instructional process for each of our students. It is our sincerest hope that we have communicated our commitment and plans through this application. We have made every document authentic to our work. Each plan and step is one that we are willing to implement on a systemic scale. We believe that if an idea is good enough for one of our students, it is good enough for all of our students.

We know that the idea of keeping students beyond the regular K-12 progression will be seen as novel, however the most successful education systems in the world revolve around a model with various transition points. We want to move beyond having students College and Career Ready to having students be College and Career Completers. We want to wrap our support systems around them until their degree or certification is in hand. We genuinely believe our students will leave us with Associate's, Bachelor's, Registered Nurse Licenses, Vocational Certifications, among many others. We also believe that every student will each have a completely unique pathway to graduation. We feel our students will all be on totally different journeys in terms of credits, time, learning environments, and instructional venues.

We also feel that to truly personalize instruction that we have to know the whole child. We think that our digital backpack concept for the "Student D.N.A." can further enhance our mastery model ten fold. Within the Student D.N.A., will rest the entire student learner profile for parents, teachers, and students to access for maximizing all facets of the instructional process. We believe we have created a system of support structures that are second to none. Student will be chosen by a direct advisor. The advisor will then goal set, monitor, and reflect with parents, students, and other teachers via the SPARC Teams. Students will then take active roles in their educational journeys as they prepare for their Defense Panels at 5th, 8th, and 12th grade.

*Expect Eminence Excellence!*

# *Eminence Independent Schools*

Board of Education  
291 W. Broadway  
Eminence, Kentucky 40019



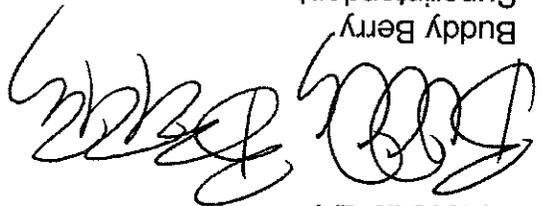
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We have also tried to create a set of Exemplars that will define the definition of what a diploma from Eminence Schools stands for with respect to World Class Knowledge and Skills, College and Career Readiness, and Next Generation Skills. Where we feel our definition far exceeds other district and national efforts is that ours is truly defined for every student at each grade level. Thus creating a common core standard for Eminence Excellence.

We are also open to serving as an I-Zone for other districts in the Commonwealth to visit and learn from. We believe that our efforts are scalable even in the largest districts in Kentucky. We also have complete financial and administrative support from our Board of Education.

In summation, we hope you determine that we are worthy of carrying the banner of innovation and personalized learning for the Commonwealth of Kentucky as a District of Innovation. As evidenced by our 100% K-12 vote from Certified Staff, we are completely committed to setting the state on F.I.R.E. one student at a time!

Believe in "E"!

  
Buddy Berry  
Superintendent



## Eminence Independent Schools

OFFICE  
254 West Broadway  
Eminence, Kentucky 40019

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502.845.1310

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thom.coffee@eminence.kyschools.us

WEB  
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TWITTER  
@thomcoffee

April 20, 2013

To Whom it May Concern,

Eminence Independent Schools is in the process of reinventing school in order to completely personalize learning for each student. It is our desire to prepare students who not only master the common core standards, but who are also equipped with next generation skills that will prepare them for jobs in the 21st century.

In the past year we have taken bold and courageous steps toward that vision by creating our School On F.I.R.E. model. In one short year we have launched the most innovative early college model in the state of Kentucky through our partnership with Bellarmine University and the creation of the B.E. Ready! program. Through this program 35 Eminence students have earned 13 hours of credit while taking classes on Bellarmine's campus two days per week. Many of the first cohort of students will obtain 37 hours of credit before graduating from Eminence. Our students are performing at a level on par with Bellarmine University's top freshman students.

Furthermore, Eminence has redesigned the master schedule to allow for immediate interventions and extensions in addition to exciting project-based electives such as Social Marketing and Community Based Problem Solving. Our students are in the first year of a 1:1 MacBook initiative making it possible for them to access course materials virtually. Eminence has begun the journey towards more blended and flipped learning environments.

Eminence partnered with The Disney Institute for Creativity and Innovation in an effort to embrace innovation as a part of our culture. Our "Blue Sky Brainstorming" and "Yes and" culture has led to many exciting solutions in a short time. In August Eminence sent the first Wi-Fi equipped bus in the state of Kentucky to transport students. In May we will open a state of the art technology cafe which will serve not only as a space for eating but also as a 21st Century collaboration lab. Plans for a state of the art school expansion are on the table as we speak. As a result of the first phase of changes and the launch of the School On F.I.R.E. Eminence, Commissioner Holliday recognized Eminence for having the highest increase in the percentage of college and career ready students in the state of Kentucky. We have seen enrollment increase significantly in the district over the past year. The School on F.I.R.E. has been recognized for innovation at both the state (KSBAs' PEAK Award, featured on KET's Education Matters and CN2's Pure Politics) and national (National School Board Association's Magna Award Winner) levels.

In short, our Board of Education, district leadership and staff are fully committed to innovating in such a way to reinvent education. Despite the reputation we have already earned as an innovative and progressive district, I can assure you we are just getting started! Being awarded the status of a District of Innovation will certainly remove barriers that will accelerate our pace and help Eminence Independent Schools become a national model for innovation.

Sincerely yours,

Thom Coffee

# ***Eminence Independent Schools***

**Eminence Middle/High School**  
254 W. Broadway  
Eminence, Kentucky 40019



(502) 845-5427  
Fax (502) 845-1310  
[www.eminence.kyschools.us](http://www.eminence.kyschools.us)

March 10, 2013

To Whom It May Concern:

The alarm sounds. You immediately jump to the floor and begin the day with a new refreshed level of excitement because as Disney states, "there is a great big beautiful tomorrow." Who in education does this, right? Well, after thirteen years in education and wondering if the field I had chosen truly could make a difference in the lives of every child... I am now that person. Making the decision to apply for a position that would allow me to serve students in a district on F.I.R.E has forever changed my life. I fully believe schools must be designed to meet the individual learning needs of a generation that is fully aware of their individualization. This task requires innovation.

Eminence Independent School System is applying to become a District of Innovation and I support the work occurring to accomplish a personalized learning environment 100%. We are currently in the final stretch of our 1<sup>st</sup> year as a school on F.I.R.E with our ACES (Apple Computers for Eminence Students) 1:1, implementation of Standards Based Grading, a schedule that provides time for ICE (Interventions, Connections and Enrichment), and BE Ready (Bellarmine and Eminence) programs all being successfully implemented and providing a strong foundation for our next bold move to further personalize learning. This has been a year of learning and building, and I am eager to begin the implementation of our next phase of innovation. We have worked to design an application that encompasses our desired next steps to continue innovative approaches to designing education that truly makes a difference by responding to the individual learning needs of every student.

"There is a great big beautiful tomorrow," and Mr. Buddy Berry with his innovative approaches to personalize learning for every child in the Eminence Independent School District and beyond is just beginning. I wake up every single day "ready to roll." It is without reservation that I am endorsing and supporting our application to become the first District of Innovation in Kentucky. Please feel free to contact me at (502) 395-0444 for any further questions you may have.

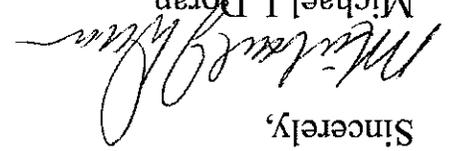
Sincerely,

Shannon Treece  
Principal, Eminence Independent Middle & High School

*Expect Eminence Excellence!*

Principal

Michael J. Doran



Sincerely,

"Expect Eminence Excellence"!

If we are going to continue to provide the next generation learning that our students deserve, and if we desire to have them all college and career ready, I believe that this will assist us in gaining the necessary resources and changes we need to make this happen.

It is with much enthusiasm and support that I write this letter to support our school districts quest for a "District of Innovation" status. The elementary staff has had numerous discussions regarding the grant and I believe to the person, they support our efforts. When I think of all the possibilities that this could bring to our district, I become overwhelmed with sheer joy for our students.

Dear Mr. Berry,

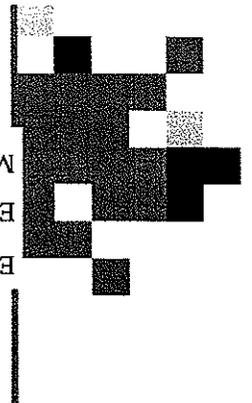
March 4, 2013

EXPECT EMINENCE EXCELLENCE

Phone: 502.845.5427 EXT.2251  
Fax: 502.845.1310  
Email: Michael.doran@eminence.kyschools.us



Eminence Independent Schools  
Eminence Elementary School  
Mr. Michael Doran, Principal



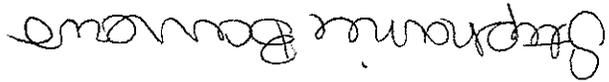
To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Stephanie Barrows and I am a special education teacher with Eminence Independent Schools. I have had the opportunity to teach at Eminence for the past four years. During my tenure, I have had the chance to not only witness, but be a part of the tremendous growth in our district. All of our changes have centered around innovation and finding new ways to reach students. If provided with the district of innovation status, I know that it will bring us closer to changing the landscape of education in our schools.

This status will allow us to personalize the educational pathway for each student that comes through Eminence Independent Schools. With regards to special education, I can only hope that one day our students will not be forced to follow one or two specific pathways. They should be allowed to create their own way by participating in community college courses, learning at vocational schools and leaving our doors. Not only should these opportunities be afforded to special education students, they also need to be fully customizable. Each student learns and progresses at his or her own pace, so we need to be able to accommodate those different learning curves. Our main focus must be on making sure that every student has the chance to succeed.

As an educator, I am proud to call myself an Eminence Warrior. The administration understands what needs to be done to change education. They do care about every student and will stop at nothing to make sure that they have the tools to be successful. I cannot wait to see what the future holds at Eminence.

Thank You,



Stephanie Barrows  
E-magineer/Special Education Teacher

I came to Eminence because of the new program to enroll students into Bellarmine University for two days a week. It was a type of program that was not even considered at my previous school and was something that even when I asked, was not allowed. When I arrived at Eminence, the school was starting the MacBook program. At first I thought that it was an okay idea but when put into affect would not work. To my surprise however, the program was an overwhelming success that allows us to do so much more as students. We are able to use the internet to help us with our work and can still do work if we are at home sick.

On my first day at Eminence this year, I sat down with the superintendent and was asked what classes I wanted to take. In my case there were some that I wanted to take that were not offered in a normal schedule, such as Algebra 2 as a sophomore, since I had already taken my geometry class. The school looked at the problem and reordered my schedule so that I could take Algebra 2 and also gave me an online course that is not generally offered. In the end I had a school schedule that is completely unique to me and fits my needs rather than the school saying that it was a problem and I would just have to retake Geometry this year.

Eminence has exceeded all expectations of mine and has personalized my classes to fit what I need and what I want to take. In the end, I would not undo my move for the world.

John D. Black

# *Eminence Independent Schools*

Eminence Middle/High School  
254 W. Broadway  
Eminence, Kentucky 40019



(502) 845-5427  
Fax (502) 845-1310  
[www.eminence.kvschools.us](http://www.eminence.kvschools.us)

March 8, 2013

To Whom It May Concern:

The Eminence Independent Schools Parent Teacher Student Association® (PTSA®) is excited at the prospect of our district being named a District of Innovation. The overall function of our association is "to make every child's potential a reality by engaging and empowering families and communities to advocate for all children." Inside of our mission, we value collaboration, commitment, accountability, respect, inclusivity, and integrity.

As a responsive organization, the PTSA® pledges to marry organizational values with those of a District of Innovation. We pledge to a collaborative and on-going relationship with a high level of participation and engagement focused on improving student learning, anytime/anywhere learning through virtual courses, moving to competency based learning and promoting PBL. Part of being responsive in education is rethinking when and where learning occurs. We continue to support innovative changes such as Bellarmine's partnership with EIS to reinvent the way school can look for high school students and look forward to expanding pathways to graduation.

We will continue to support novel ideas. Our conversations will include establishing goals and measurable outcomes that align with current district initiatives. The PTSA® promises to organize human, fiscal, and physical resources to clearly support innovation. As part of the proposed innovation plan, we will work with stakeholders to support implementation of a data-driven, research-based plan with fidelity to the accountability system.

The PTSA® mission is everychild. onevoice.® At the district level, the PTSA commits to equity and demonstrates an appreciation for diversity. As part of the innovative design components, the PTSA® pledges to propose and advocate for innovative programs that prepare students for success in life and work. We will continue our comprehensive and systematic approach to partnering with internal and external organizations to provide a variety of services to a variety of students. The EIS PTSA® is proud to be a part of a pioneering district. Being innovative is being willing to experiment with non-traditional approaches and being able to implement these approaches. We are both willing and able.

Thank you,

*Ashley Perkins*

Ashley Perkins, NBCT  
EIS PTSA® President, 2012-2013  
ashleyperkins78@gmail.com

*Expect Eminence Excellence!*

The Eminence administrators and faculty have been a joy to work with. "We can do that" more often than not has been their answer to everything. From the Superintendent to the Principal to the faculty, we have been amazed how dedicated they are to the success of their students. They have been adamant from the start that we don't "water down" our courses just because the students are still at high school and I'm proud to say that we have not. Of the 36 who started with us in the fall, 34 returned this spring. Our faculty members in the program continue to be impressed at how well the Eminence

tuition fees which is just simply remarkable. (Introduction to College) course in the fall. The school district paid for all their students' textbooks and faculty but for the Eminence students only. Students also took our IDC, 100 – Freshman Focus Speaking). These are the same Bellarmine courses as taken by our regular students taught by Bellarmine courses this semester (ENGL 200 – Reading Literature and COMM 103 – Introduction to Public Expository Writing and GEOG 175 – Introduction to Human Geography) and are currently taking two a sneak preview of their courses. Eminence students took two courses in the fall (ENGL 101 – weeks to introduce the students to the physical campus, university life, their Bellarmine instructors, and The Eminence school year started three weeks before Bellarmine's fall semester so we took those three

questions they may have. of the school year to meet with students and their parents to talk about the program and answer any the Eminence at Bellarmine program. Bellarmine administrators travelled to Eminence prior to the start (mostly Juniors and seniors with a few sophomores who all met our admissions criteria) were enrolled in WI-FI equipped allowing students to continue their learning to and from classes. 36 Eminence students travel to our campus in Louisville twice a week to take Bellarmine courses. The school bus would be Eminence approached us over a year ago with their bold idea to have a select group of their students Bellarmine liaison and I have thoroughly enjoyed getting to know my counterparts from Henry County. demonstrates that Eminence is ready to become a District of Innovation. It is my privilege to be the the district's School on Fire program, is a great example of the kind of innovative thinking that application to be considered one of the founding Districts of Innovation in the Commonwealth of Kentucky. The partnership between Bellarmine University and Eminence Independent Schools, part of it is my distinct pleasure to write this letter of support for the Eminence Independent Schools'

To Whom It May Concern,

February 26, 2013

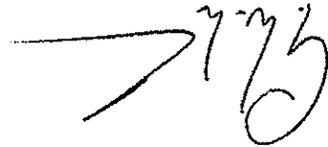
BELLARMINE UNIVERSITY  
IN VERITATIS AMORE



students have taken to the college environment and to college-level work. Many are on a par with some of our best students and all are able to do the work successfully.

We are currently working with Eminence on enrolling the second cohort as well as welcoming back those sophomores and juniors from this year's cohort who will return next year to take further courses with us (this time with other Bellarmine students). The goal of the Eminence at Bellarmine program is to prepare Eminence students for college and we fully expect all of the current students to go to college whether it is at Bellarmine or elsewhere. This has been an amazing first year and we are looking forward to many more to come. Eminence Independent Schools have shown how it can be done, we are proud to be their partners, and we are anxiously waiting to see what else they have planned. They are truly a school on fire.

Sincerely,



Graham W. L. Ellis, Ph.D.

Assistant Vice-President for Academic Affairs

Bellarmine University

Tel: 502-272-8218

Email: [gellis@bellarmine.edu](mailto:gellis@bellarmine.edu)

March 4, 2013



College of Education  
Office of the Dean  
103 Dickey Hall  
Lexington, KY 40506-0017  
859 257-2813  
fax 859 323-1046  
www.education.uky.edu

Dr. Terry Holliday, Commissioner  
Kentucky Department of Education  
500 Mero Street  
Frankfort, Kentucky

Dear Commissioner Holliday:

It is an honor to submit a letter of support for Eminence Independent's application to become a District of Innovation. My first introduction to Superintendent Buddy Berry and Instructional Supervisor Thom Coffee began two years ago through our partnership in the Next Generation Leadership Academy where I was privileged to have a front-row seat to watch the amazing transformation of the district unfolding and creating a model for others to emulate. While some district leaders were still testing the terrain to *Next Generation Learning* by considering which new strategies to embrace and which ones to leave to another time, Buddy and Thom had already laced up their shoes, jumped into innovation with both feet, and begun the climb to higher standards, higher expectations, and higher outcomes for all students. Never once did I observe them looking back or doubting direction, complaining about slope of the terrain or being fearful of next steps. Never once did I observe them giving in or giving up when faced with multiple challenges related to budgets, staffing, or reluctant learners. Instead, they skillfully and thoughtfully carved the path and paved the way for others to follow.

In less than nine months, Eminence Independent launched *School on F.I.R.E.* (Framework of Innovation for Reinventing Education) which is designed around the critical attributes of *Next Generation Learning*. With this launch, administrators, board members, and the entire community embraced preparing students for their future and not the familiar past. With this launch, Eminence Independent set a pace for Kentucky that is not only influencing P-12 educators, but higher education faculty as well by creating a learning innovation zone that we would be proud to have as a site for the University of Kentucky's College of Education clinical preparation of teachers.

By selecting Eminence Independent as a District of Innovation, it is my belief you will be honoring skillful and creative-thinking, innovative problem-solving, and student-centered teaching and learning. In short, you will help support the traits we want to model and promote in future teachers and leaders throughout the state.

Thank you for the vision and thought inherent in the selection of Districts of Innovation. I believe districts that receive this distinction will have far-reaching transformational effects for all students in the Commonwealth.

Sincerely,

Mary John O'Hair  
Dean

see blue.

Emminence's mission-driven programs are characterized by clear program goals and objectives with measurable outcomes. Innovative, research-based, best-practice design and delivery systems are prominently featured in the Eminence learning environment as well. Thorough planning and careful use of resources have contributed to the efficacy of an Eminence education which enhances the scalability of many of their model projects. Selection of Eminence for the Innovative District status would benefit all Commonwealth High School students as they share important creative ways to learn.

Through the visionary inspiration of Eminence Superintendent, Buddy Berry, Bellarmine University participates in a unique partnership to provide college credit for academically qualified high school students. The partnership between Bellarmine and Eminence Independent Schools includes laptops and a Wi-Fi equipped bus. Eminence students come to Bellarmine two days a week to experience college life and receive instruction from Bellarmine University faculty. Bellarmine provides substantially reduced tuition to the students, who can earn up to 30+ hours of credit during their high school career. This unique collaboration is an excellent example of innovation...from a collaborative, action-oriented school district.

There is no school district more deserving of the Kentucky Innovative District designation than the Eminence Independent School District. Through my direct experience with the leadership, faculty, students and staff at Eminence, I have been personally and professionally challenged to think creatively about learning and teaching in K-12 Schools and in the higher education arena. Most importantly, as a result of this creative Eminence team's action, Kentucky high school students are learning in new and dynamic ways. Innovative change is happening now at Eminence and will be extended through their participation as an officially appointed innovative learning place.

To Whom It May Concern:

March 5, 2013

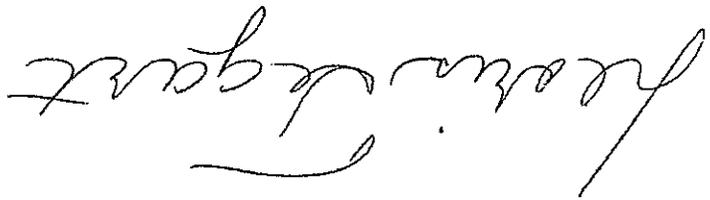
BELLARMINE UNIVERSITY  
IN VERITATIS AMORE



Probably the most distinctive ingredient responsible for the Eminence District's success is the administrative team's enthusiastic passion and dedication to student learning. This contagious spirit is the driving force behind this extraordinary school. If selected, Eminence will yield powerful returns for Kentucky's youth and ultimately the workforce for our future.

I most highly recommend Eminence Independent School District for the "District of Innovation" status.

Best regards,



Dr. Doris A. Tegar, Ed.D.  
Provost of Bellarmine University

**GERRY SWAN**  
Assistant Professor  
University of Kentucky



College of Education  
Department of Curriculum and Instruction  
143C Taylor Education Building  
Lexington, KY 40506-017  
Fax: 859-257-1602  
Email: [gerry.swan@uky.edu](mailto:gerry.swan@uky.edu)  
website: <http://otisonline.org>

Dear Members of the District of Innovation Review Committee:

Please accept this letter as my enthusiastic and full support of Eminence Independent School District to be designated one of Kentucky's Districts of Innovation. One way of thinking of innovation is making connections and configurations in a way that is new for that context. EIS has one of the most crucial elements that I feel is necessary for innovation, which is a willingness to stop doing some thing they deem counter productive and reexamine things that may have been working under a different set of assumptions about how to best serve students.

Many of the facets of the EIS proposal are not "new", but their willingness to go back and rethink how they fit various processes together is. Education has a huge and robust knowledge base. What we need are districts who can deploy that knowledge base in new ways that will give students a robust experience to grow as people. I look forward to supporting EIS and learning with them as they continue the exciting journey they have started.

Eminence Independent School District has the capacity to redesign school. More importantly they have will to change and without the will the capacity is nothing.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gerry Swan'.

Gerry Swan, Ph.D.  
Assistant Professor  
University of Kentucky  
Department of Curriculum and Instruction

260 Democrat Drive  
 Frankfort, KY 40601  
 1-800-372-2962 • FAX (502) 695-5451  
 KSBA Website: www.ksba.org



March 11, 2013

Kentucky Department of Education  
 Dr. Terry Holliday  
 Capital Plaza Tower  
 Frankfort, Kentucky 40601

Dear Dr. Holliday,

Innovation is not something you just decide to start. It is something – over time – you create and nurture on a continuous and consistent basis to place yourself on a platform where the school culture will perform boldly and creatively. No doors are closed and no ideas are squashed as you proceed to reach lofty goals and new ideals about how to help students succeed.

Eminence Independent Schools are a **School On Fire** working for the children of this school district to make education for all a success above and beyond their peers. It is my distinct pleasure to write this endorsement of their past, present and future work in the application to become a "District of Innovation".

Since 1901 the Eminence Independent School District has been recognized and acclaimed for its work to individualize the educational programming of each child and to take them to the next level and beyond. I would offer some recent examples of this work as a historical prospective:

- Participated as a charter member of Kentucky's team working with the National Alliance for Restructuring Education (NARE) addressing high school restructuring.
- Created a tier alternative graduation program titled Certificate of Initial Mastery (CIM) that required academic performance above the high school diploma level to challenge students to reach higher.
- Instituted a no fail policy and no grade accepted below a B.
- One of the first school districts in Kentucky to institute true year round education and participate nationally in the National Alliance for Year Round Education (NAYRE).
- Partnered with the Whitney Young Job Corp Center to provide education services leading to a high school diploma or GED for hundreds of students who previously were high school dropouts.
- One of the first school districts in Kentucky to fully embrace and implement a Site Based Decision Making Council (SBDM).

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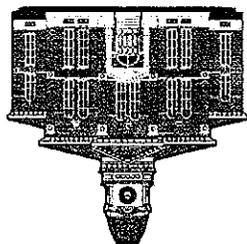
Eminence has all the tools necessary to make the Districts of Innovation program successful. The community is accustomed to participation in innovative ideas and programs and has demonstrated strong support over a long period of time. The board of education has been a consistent cohesive unit for approximately 20 years with no turnover and a healthy working knowledge of what it takes to be innovative. The administration from superintendent, instructional supervisor, high school principal and elementary principal are seasoned veterans who have a diversity of experiences to bring to the table. The faculty and staff are trained, willing and very capable to be the delivery vehicle to the student body. All the bases are covered.

I could not be any more enthused than I currently am about my endorsement for Eminence to participate in this program. I am very familiar with the legislation and administrative regulations for this program and I can assure you that Eminence can and will create an outstanding application that will blow you away. I stand committed to you and the people of Eminence to provide any additional support you or they may need in the foreseeable future. Thank you for your consideration and I feel certain that Eminence will be a top performer.

Sincerely,



David A. Baird



**JOHN LOGAN BRENT**

HENRY COUNTY JUDGE/EXECUTIVE

P.O. BOX 202

NEW CASTLE, KENTUCKY 40050

Phone (502) 845-5707

FAX (502) 845-5743

Office Email:

hjudgeexec@hotmail.com

February 28, 2013

**RE Recommendation of Eminence Schools for Inaugural District of Innovation Distinction**

Dear Kentucky Department of Education,

Please accept this letter as an indication of my full support and belief that Eminence Schools should be recognized as an "Inaugural District of Innovation". Eminence recently unleashed their "School on Fire" initiative and from what have I witnessed, they are indeed on fire. Hallmark pieces of their new initiative include issuing every high school student a lap top and busing high school students to Bellemeine for college classes. While many high schools offer classes for college credit, Eminence offers the college experience. Because of such innovative ideas as these, as well as the school's general reputation for excellence, the word is out about Eminence. Their roll has grown by 150 students over the last couple of years. Many of these students are traveling from neighboring counties because of the personal attention, opportunities for involvement, academic standards, and overall passion that the staff and students have for each other.

Eminence is simply a very unique school with a vision that is shared by staff, students, and community. I am reminded of this each year when my wife and I attend the annual Education Foundation Dinner. Attendance at this event usually ranges between 150 and 200. It is not uncommon for the Foundation to raise \$8-10,000. These are huge numbers for a rural community and they exhibit the pride that the community has for the school.

In closing I ask for your full consideration of Eminence School for the Inaugural District distinction. If you have any questions please feel free to contact me at (502) 845-5707. Thank you again for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

John Logan Brent

Henry County Judge/Executive

Drane Stephens, Mayor  
City of Eminence, KY

*Drane Stephens*

Sincerely,

I want to make a recommendation on behalf of the Eminence Independent School District's application to become one of Kentucky's Inaugural Districts of Innovation. To do so, I want to share with you what I have found to be the very best definition of a city I have ever found.

The chief advance in all lines of human endeavor has been through the nurture and growth of urban life. The urban community has played the chief part in human affairs and has, in a greater measure than any other factor, determined the density of the human race. The city has been the dominating influence in directing the course of history. The whole story or man's achievements are mainly the story of a few cities. The city is today, and always has been, the center of wealth; of political, industrial and commercial power; of poverty, squalor and human weakness; of education, virtue and morality; of ignorance, vice and crime.

I share this because a city is only as good as the sum of its ingredients. We are a great city. We are great because of our people and our school. You can travel far and wide and you will not find a city anywhere in this nation that means as much to its community as the Eminence Independent School District means to the city of Eminence. They are fantastic partners in the progression of our city from almost barbaric to cutting edge. This city would not exist without the school. That sounds extreme and exaggerated, but it is a fact. It provides a top quality education for all our children. It provides employment for many of our citizens. It draws students from several counties away which in turn infuses much additional revenue into our city but even more than any of this, the school in Eminence <Kentucky is the most important cog in the greatness of our city.

I know when I need anything as Mayor the school will be there. I know my children are safe there. I know my children are getting a top notch education. My wife has taught there. I am not alone in this connection with the school. Every member of the community is wound into the web of Eminence Excellence. We expect Eminence Excellence and they never fail to deliver.

Eminence School will not benefit nearly as much being chosen for this honor as the District of Innovation will benefit for them being a part of it.

To whom it may concern:

1 March 2013

CAREY D. DUNCAN  
POLICE CHIEF  
GARY LUCAS  
FIRE CHIEF



DRANE STEPHENS  
MAYOR

SANDRA A. DOANE  
CITY CLERK / TREASURER  
WILLIAM W. SMITH  
PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR



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<http://www.ovec.org>

**Leon Mooneyhan, Ph.D.**  
Chief Executive Officer  
**Keith Davis, Chairman**  
Board of Directors

Anchorage • Bullitt • Carroll • Eminence • Franklin • Gallatin • Grant • Henry • Oldham • Owen • Shelby • Spencer • Trimble

To: Kentucky Department of Education  
Division of Innovation and Partner Engagement

From: Tina B. Tipton  
Chief Academic Officer/Deputy CEO  
Ohio Valley Educational Cooperative

Date: March 8, 2013

RE: Letter of Support for Eminence Independent Schools' Application-Districts of Innovation

I am writing this letter of strong support for the Eminence Independent Schools (EIS) to be selected to serve of one of Kentucky's historic Inaugural Districts of Innovation. Prior to sharing with you my observations and comments on why I believe EIS is deserving of this selection, please allow me some time to share with you my relationship with this district over the past 30 years.

I have worked with or along side of EIS since the late 1970's as we were both members of the Ohio Valley Educational Cooperative. At one point in the history of EIS they were one of a few districts in Kentucky to implement an alternative calendar to meet the needs of struggling students and their gifted students. They also implemented for many years a comprehensive mastery program for students where failure was not an option, working to have students achieve to a grade level mastery of average or above, building in many supports, expanded learning opportunities, including their 21<sup>st</sup> Century Grant funds to provide tutoring for students. Touches of innovation have been present in this small independent district for many years, but now they are ready to move way outside the vision of innovation to being one of Kentucky's Districts of Innovation. The leadership in this district truly is capable of not only knowing what is "in the box of innovation" but thinking outside this "box of innovation" and what has to be in place for students to be prepared at high levels for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century College and Career standards.

In addition to watching EIS for many years from my work in a neighboring district, while I served as a school administrator in Shelby County, I also worked in EIS as the Interim Superintendent in 2005-2006. Since that time I have worked directly with them again, through my work at OVEC. To be honest, EIS is probably one of the "best kept secrets" in Kentucky as a school district! For many years they have grown stronger with the foundation work of Superintendent David Baird to the exemplary and innovative leadership of Mr. Buddy Berry as their Superintendent. When Mr. Berry became Superintendent, he immediately worked with the team to develop this vision of innovation. What do we need to do create and change the current learning environment specifically with student learning in mind? They have done this by taking risk for kids, building partnerships, modeling for teachers what

needs to be in place for the students. They have created alternative/flexible schedules for kids based upon data and review it constantly in their "Furnace Room!" They are truly a school on FIRE!

What they are providing with their personalized learning, student voice and how they differentiate learning for all kids, not only models for all of us that the leadership and staff are demonstrating all avenues of support for kids to build the mastery of learning and competencies for learning. I have said about Mr. Berry, "Do not tell Buddy Berry that something cannot be done!! If it is needed to be done in EIS for kids, he will see that the team does it!" Look at their work with Bellarmine University as a partnership and making sure that the students do not waste instructional time by having Wi-Fi on the school bus or finding ways to provide more computers for students, when we know that an independent district has fewer funding sources that our larger districts. They make it happen for kids!

I pause at this time to not only ask the reader of this letter, but myself, the question...."If EIS has worked to implement this plan of innovation in the past 3 years under the current leadership team, then does that not demonstrate to any observer they are committed to continuing on this continuum of innovation to improve the quality of services for students?" There is no question that the documentation exists to show they have the components in place to be an inaugural "District of Innovation!" I strongly support their work and application and honored to be in an educational cooperative working with a team that truly demonstrates they are all about students!

If additional information is needed, please do not hesitate to contact me at the OVEC office or on my cell phone at 502.682.0411.

Sincerely,



Tina B. Tipton  
CAO/Deputy CEO

Ohio Valley Educational Cooperative



February 26, 2013

To: Kentucky Department of Education  
FR: Dr. Deborah Walker, Ed.D.

RE: District of Innovation Recommendation Letter

This letter serves as a recommendation for Eminence Independent Schools in its bid to be recognized as a District of Innovation under Kentucky statute. Eminence has distinguished itself by embracing the tenets of SB 1 and striving in innovative ways to ensure that all its students graduate from high school ready for college and career. Having high school students who have met their ACT benchmark attend classes and earn credit at Bellarmine University, installing wireless connectivity to the buses so they can use their time traveling to Bellarmine to study and complete assignments, offering an increased array of Advanced Placement courses, and providing 1:1 computers for students are examples of how Eminence has taken a systemic approach to increase college readiness. In fact, their emphasis on technology use led to the entire community becoming wireless. At the same time, the district is working to increase student engagement and deepen learning K-12, endeavoring to ensure that all students have a rich educational experience that will open options for them after high school.

Superintendent Berry refers to Eminence High School as a School on Fire, indicative of the energy and excitement he and local administrators and teachers are applying to improving learning for students. Even more noteworthy is that Eminence is a very small, rural district with limited resources. Yet the district has been able to seek inventive ways to leverage resources and add value. I believe that Eminence has demonstrated its spirit of innovation and its willingness to continue to create new learning opportunities for its students. The District of Innovation initiative seems custom-made for this district which if selected could also serve as a model for other districts, especially those in rural settings.

Sincerely,

Deborah Walker, Ed.D.  
President and CEO



The Kentucky Network  
600 Cooper Drive  
Lexington, KY 40502-2296  
(859) 258-7000  
www.ket.org

March 11, 2013

Buddy Berry  
Superintendent  
Eminence Independent Schools  
291 West Broadway  
Eminence, KY 40019

Dear Superintendent Berry,

I had the opportunity to visit your district recently and spent quite a bit of time talking with teachers and students and popping into classrooms while instruction was taking place. I was truly amazed to see the learning community you have created in a relatively short amount of time with your innovative School on FIRE.

The sweeping changes you have made in scheduling the school day, integrating technology into instruction and professional development, creating a collegial environment for teaching, and giving students a voice in their learning are excellent examples of how to implement innovation and achieve system-wide buy-in.

Eminence has created a model of learning that really focuses on the student. The innovative Interventions, Connections, and Enrichments (ICE) approach includes routinely analyzing data from formative and summative assessments and talking about student needs with teachers and administrators so students receive customized instruction and immediate interventions. This flexible approach to scheduling allows students to get what they need to attain mastery, which increases their chances for success in college and fosters a college-going culture.

All of these innovations resulted in KET featuring Eminence Independent in the February 2013 edition of **Education Matters** focused on innovation in student-directed learning.

It is my pleasure to write this letter of support for your application for Eminence Independent Schools to serve as one of Kentucky's inaugural Districts of Innovation.

Sincerely,

Lynda M. Thomas  
Director, Distance Learning and Professional Development  
Field Producer for **Education Matters**

# Eminence Independent Schools

Board of Education  
291 W. Broadway  
Eminence, Kentucky 40019



(502) 845-4788  
Fax (502) 845-2339  
[www.eminence.kyschools.us](http://www.eminence.kyschools.us)

## Eminence Independent Schools' Partners

City of Eminence  
Henry County Government  
Parent Teacher Student Organization  
Eminence Education Foundation  
The Apple Business Store  
University of Kentucky  
Bellarmine University  
Jefferson Community College  
Morehead State University  
Kentucky State University  
Eminence Rotary

Henry County Chamber of Commerce  
The G-School for Design Thinking  
Buck Institute

Shelby County Area Technology Center  
Collaborative for Teaching and Learning  
Ohio Valley Educational Cooperative  
University of Louisville

Galen University (pending)  
Sullivan University (pending)

Wehr Constructors  
Studio Kremer Architects  
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Physician's First Medical Clinic  
Tri-County Baptist Hospital (pending)  
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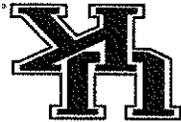
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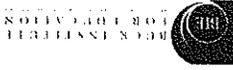


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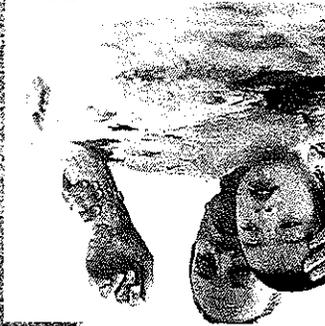
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# MAGNA AWARDS 2013



## Eminence Independent Schools, Eminence, Ky.

### ABOUT THE PROGRAM

Eminence created its School On F.I.R.E. (Framework of Innovation for Reinventing Education) program to foster a college-focused culture in the district. At the time, high school students were transferring to neighboring districts in record numbers. The school board sought feedback and found students were leaving due to the lack of technology, elective course choices, and the opportunity for advanced college-prep courses. The board took several actions to address those concerns. Every student now receives a free laptop. The master schedule was redesigned to promote mastery in learning and provide opportunities for enrichment and interventions. Students performing well in core classes can take an array of electives. Any student who meets college readiness requirements can take classes at Bellarmine University and earn up to 13 credits a year. The board pays the tu-



ition, travel, and book fees for these students, many of whom are first-generation college attendees.

### RESULTS

Eminence was not meeting adequate yearly progress (AYP) before School On F.I.R.E. Recent Kentucky Department of Education data shows that the high school now is ranked in the top 15 percent in the state. More students are receiving the state's "College and Career

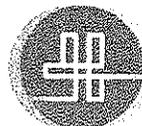
Readiness" distinction, and more are taking the ACT before their junior year in hopes of qualifying for early college. The personalization of instruction through the redesigned schedule led to a 19.3 percent increase in enrollment.

### THE BOARD'S INVOLVEMENT

The school board had the vision to prepare every student in the district for post-secondary success. Without that vision, the district would have continued doing business as usual. The board's \$250,000 commitment reinvigorated a small, poor, rural district and showed that creating a college-going culture was possible. The board reinvented school to prepare first-generation college students for postsecondary success.

### CONTACT INFORMATION

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Website: [www.eminence.kyschools.us](http://www.eminence.kyschools.us).



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
APRIL 15, 2013

## NEW STATEWIDE FOUNDATION FORMED TO PROVIDE EXTRA SUPPORT FOR INNOVATIVE TEACHERS AND SCHOOLS

*The Fund for Transforming Education in Kentucky established by business, government, and education leaders*

Frankfort, Ky. — Several business, government and education leaders today announced the launch of a new non-profit organization that will encourage and support innovative new approaches in Kentucky classrooms. The announcement came at a news conference at the Kentucky Chamber of Commerce headquarters in Frankfort.

The Fund for Transforming Education in Kentucky (The Fund) will start off by partnering with the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) to administer two recent grants from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation totaling nearly \$3 million. The first grant will help establish teacher networks and forums so innovative teachers can more easily "connect" with other teachers around the state and share promising new ideas for improving student outcomes.

The second grant is aimed at bringing together teachers in the "core" subject areas, such as science and math, so they can collaborate on assignments for students. It is hoped that this collaboration will yield significant improvements in student achievement.

In addition to overseeing those grants over the next three years, The Fund will also raise additional finances to support other innovative projects, such as providing "venture capital" to individual teachers and schools that have promising new ideas but need additional resources to move forward.

"Those of us in business typically set aside funds for research and development," said Billy Harper, a Paducah business leader who is Chairman of The Fund and led today's announcement. "This R&D is what leads to improved products and services, sustains jobs, and gives us a competitive edge. We hope The Fund will play the same sort of role in encouraging and supporting innovative new approaches in education, pre-school through high school, and thus help build on all the recent progress made in our state."

"Overseeing the work sponsored by the Gates Foundation will obviously be our top priority for the next couple of years," said Harper. "But looking further down the road, we will work to raise more money so we can provide an even bigger boost for innovative thinkers in schools. Although we have not set any long-term fundraising targets, we have received lots of encouragement from individuals, corporations, and foundations. So we think our goal of providing seed money for breakthrough ideas will have appeal to the many folks and organizations who want to help further transform education in Kentucky."

Kentucky Commissioner of Education Terry Holliday, Lt. Gov. Jerry Abramson, and other state education and government leaders offered their support.

"I very much welcome the formation of The Fund," said Holliday. "Kentucky is blessed with several excellent organizations, such as the Pritchard Committee, which have been advocates for change. "These organizations have helped spur the outstanding reform that has taken place here over the past two decades, and the need for that advocacy continues. But I believe The Fund will play a different role, by providing external support for promising ideas and for so-called 'Districts of Innovation'. This sort of outside agent can be critical, and we greatly appreciate having them as a partner."

*Continued*

**THE FUND FOR TRANSFORMING  
EDUCATION IN KENTUCKY**



Holiday cited the Colorado Legacy Foundation, which started in 2008 and has partnered with the Colorado Department of Education on several successful projects, as a good model for The Fund.

"I have been very impressed by their work," he said. "They have been very successful, especially in appealing to local and national foundations that wanted to support innovation in schools but preferred to give to a non-profit rather than state government. I think The Fund will have much the same appeal here in Kentucky, and the same transformational effect."

Some Kentucky districts are trying out innovative new practices and getting great results, leading to lots of attention from state and national media. For example, Eminence Independent District is using technology, not as a goal in itself but rather as a very effective tool to personalize instruction and better engage students. And in Danville, teachers from very different subject areas are now collaborating in exciting ways to help students better understand how skills in one subject area can relate to another.

"These are the sorts of innovative practices The Fund will be trying to foster and replicate," said Abramson, who cited other examples which emphasize how innovative approaches in education can directly link to tomorrow's jobs.

"Elkhorn Crossing School in Scott County is trying new approaches to prepare students for high-skilled careers in fields like biomedical sciences and engineering," said Lieutenant Governor who serves on the board of directors for The Fund. "And Hardin County Schools has joined a dynamic new partnership with Western Kentucky University, the Central Kentucky Community Foundation, and the Elizabethtown Community and Technical College to jointly promote college and careers."

Initially, The Fund's office will be located at the Kentucky Chamber of Commerce in Frankfort. For more information, visit [www.thefundky.org](http://www.thefundky.org)

###

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## Emminence Ind's School on F.I.R.E. program, which changed the district's approach to education, set to receive KSBAs PEAk Award

Emminence Independent Schools to receive KSBAs PEAk Award

The Kentucky School Boards Association will present Eminence Independent Schools officials with the Public Education Achieves in Kentucky (PEAK) Award, Tuesday, Dec. 4 at the Eminence School following a 9 a.m. demonstration of the district's winning School on F.I.R.E. (Framework of Innovation for Reinventing Education) program.

KSBA established the PEAK Award in 1997 to focus statewide attention on outstanding public school efforts aimed specifically at enhancing student learning skills and, in doing so, to promote the positive impact of public elementary and secondary education in Kentucky.

Emminence created the School on F.I.R.E. program when district officials began taking a hard look at their schools and discovered some tough facts that were hard to ignore.

"We were losing quite a few students," said Eminence Superintendent Buddy Berry. "They were starting with us but leaving to finish elsewhere ... we had a deficit in enrollment. And we had another concern, that students were qualifying for college but were not finishing college. I think that is a national trend as well, and it was definitely true for our students, also."

To stop those trends, the district reevaluated most of its approaches and created School On F.I.R.E. to give its students not only the education they needed, but one they wanted.

School On F.I.R.E. was created after seeking input from all students in the district, asking them what they wanted in their schools and what they didn't; what the district was doing well and what it wasn't.

"Overwhelmingly, the students said we need to be doing more in the area of technology," Berry said. "And, we had no AP programs, so our high school and middle school students said, 'A lot of us and our friends have looked at leaving because we were not able to have the high, rigorous classes that an AP high school would offer.'"

That has all changed this year. The district started a one-to-one initiative at the high school, providing every student with a laptop, and students can now earn college credit by actually going to college. The biggest change was to the traditional school schedule: It no longer exists at the high school.

"Our entire model is based on mastery – we want every student to master every standard," Berry said. "In order to do that, students take their core classes on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, and then on Tuesdays and Thursdays we implemented an ICE model, which stands for Interventions, Connections and Enrichment."

For students on the enrichment path, that means Tuesdays and Thursdays taking classes on the campus of Bellarmine University in Louisville – with tuition discounted 92 percent by Bellarmine and paid for by the Eminence school board. These students also travel to and from the campus on a Wi-Fi enabled school bus, using those three hours of travel time weekly for learning.

Senior Brenna Raisor said not only has the chance to attend classes at Bellarmine given her "everything I'll need to succeed next year," but the new class schedule has given students a greater mastery of their lessons. There used to be seven classes a day, each 53 minutes long. Now there are five, 75-minute classes.

"This gives us longer class times, making it easier for the teachers to delve into the lessons and more time for the students to understand them," she wrote. "... with longer class times I have the opportunity for much more one-on-one time with teachers if I'm struggling with anything, and that is reflecting in my grades."

To qualify for early college, students must score an 18 in English, 19 on math and 20 on reading on the ACT, which are the criteria to get into Bellarmine.

Students who need intensive intervention or those who need a little help understanding classroom content get that on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

"We wanted to do the intervention immediately after the kid started struggling," Berry said. "So if a kid starts struggling on Monday, the teacher immediately implements an intervention on Tuesday to get them ready for the whole group on Wednesday. By getting 35 percent of our students off campus, we're able to reduce class sizes on Tuesdays and Thursdays."

Connections students work on comprehensive projects that incorporate many of their core classes.

"It's a class that is completely built on the common core content, but it's five or six subjects all meshed into a challenge based class," Berry said. "For instance, the social marketing class has one goal: break a Guinness World Record while generating as much national exposure for a philanthropic cause as possible, while raising revenue for that organization. So they're going into business class, into marketing class, into math class, into English class, it's all those standards rolled together."

All of these changes have been made with the input of student and teacher VOICE (Vision Of Innovative Classroom Excellence) teams.

"No longer were students limited in their choice of electives," wrote English teacher Whitney Christiansen in her nomination of the program. "At Eminence, if enough students wish for a class, the staff finds a way to make that class happen. This increases student engagement and performance while meeting the needs of a diverse, yet small population."

Despite turning the traditional education model upside down, Berry said the district has been able to do it without any special waivers.

"We did not do any waivers of any policies, so we are meeting all seat requirement time," he said. "This new model is not taking advantage of any waivers; it is potentially available for anybody to do. We're meeting all the core seat time, we're meeting all the core graduation requirements, so that's exciting."

"We want every kid to be surprised and delighted every day that they're at school," he said. "So we want them to go home and be like, 'Today was unreal at school.' Is every day like that? No, but there are more days like that than not."

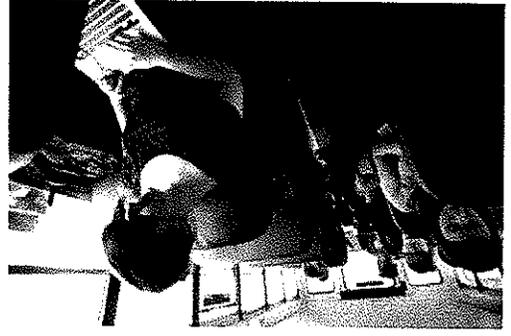
- Eminnence Independent school district facts**
- The Eminnence Independent school district was founded in 1901.
  - Eminnence serves 600 students pre-K through 12th grade.
  - Eminnence has 64 percent of students on free or reduced-price meals.

Berry said. At the heart of the question is "surprise and delight," which runs through everything we do. It's our culture."

Berry said a central question guides the district's actions: "How can we go and have a culture where every kid is going to be college and career ready, with all of the demands that come with that, and still go and make school the most exciting eight hours a kid could ever imagine as many times as possible?"

**26-27 Innovation Summit Oct.**

In May, the school introduced its **School on FIRE** (Framework of Innovation for Reinventing Education) initiative, which includes Apple MacBook Pro laptop computers for every high school student; a revised schedule with three days for core classes and two days for interventions and enrichments; and free college classes at Bellarmine University in Louisville for students who meet the state's college-readiness standards on the ACT.



*Eminnence High School (Eminnence Independent) senior Hannah Ellis uses her computer on the Wi-Fi bus that will take her to Bellarmine University for classes.*

It's the kind of place where 3rd graders take a fractions test by baking pizzas in the school cafeteria, 4th graders take a geometry test by building a birdhouse and high schoolers use their laptop computers on a Wi-Fi-enabled bus on their way to take free college classes two days a week.

The Eminnence Independent school district is trying to create an educational Disneyland®, and administrators embrace the comparison. In fact, administrators spent three and a half days over the summer at the Disney Institute for Creativity and Innovation "to learn how they embed a culture of systemic innovation and creativity while engaging and personalizing it for every single person," Superintendent Buddy Berry said.

By Matthew Tungate  
matthew.tungate@education.ky.gov

Posted on 09 October 2012. Tags: Bellarmine Eminnence, School on FIRE

## Eminnence on 'FIRE' after changes

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# Kentucky Teacher

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asked district teachers to show up for a morning meeting. When they got there, administrators put them on a bus and sent them to Kosar Children's Hospital in Louisville. The teachers' job was to ask the children how the hospital had made their stay more enjoyable. After teachers disembarking from the bus, another bus pulled up – this one filled with 53-inch donated stuffed bears for the children inside the hospital.

"That's the type of activity we're doing to imbed systemic surprise and delight" into the school day," Berry said. "We model for them, in our talks, exactly what we want them doing here."

While the school is doing many innovative things, its foundation is mastery learning for college and career readiness, Berry said.

Berry said teachers have overwhelmingly supported the changes in the school.

"Who's going to choose dull and dreary over surprise and delight? You're just not going to purposely choose that," he said. "I think the dilemma is how do you create that culture of both (including college and career readiness)?"

Travis Hernandez, an Emience alumnus and special education teacher, said administrator modeling has helped him understand the kinds of changes he needs to make to his practice.

"You actually get to experience what surprise and delight is, so it enables us to project that toward our students and give that same feeling to them," he said.

Kristian Lively, a high school mathematics teacher, said she tries to use the technique on Fridays. For instance, she asked students to make a movie using their computers rather than doing homework.

"I would like to move into more huge 'surprise and delight' mode," Lively said. "Now, I haven't got there yet, but still, I think that the kids are engaged and want to have fun."

Whitney Christiansen, an English and drama teacher in her first year in the district, said teachers wish students would look at learning as if it is fun.

"Hopefully we kind of instill that wish in them and connect those two feelings in their brain," she said. "It takes some thinking. Not necessarily a lot of work, but asking, 'What are they going to like?'"

Even before announcing the School on FIRE changes, Emience had a history of innovation. Students already are required to achieve a B or better in their classes, even if they require remediation and retesting. The district also uses an extended calendar of nine weeks in session and two weeks off.

**Kentucky promotes school innovation**

Education officials frequently cite Emience as an example of the kind of innovation they would like to see school districts implementing.

Thanks to the District of Innovation bill passed earlier this year, the Kentucky Department of Education has developed a draft regulation that encourages school districts to implement innovative educational programs for their students. In exchange, the districts will be given flexibility from selected state laws and regulations and local board of education policies for school administrators, teachers and staff.

According to the regulation, innovative strategies provide non-traditional approaches to all areas of curriculum, instruction, assessment, governance and school operation and may include:

- moving to a competency-based learning system, including development of alternate methods of delivery of curriculum and of measuring mastery of standards and skills
- creating multiple pathways to graduation including rigorous career and technical pathways, apprenticeships, early college high schools, early graduation options and digital learning opportunities
- rethinking the times and places that learning occurs, including lengthening or flexing the school day and school year, moving learning beyond the traditional school building, and incorporating extended learning opportunities
- implementing alternative forms of governance
- designing learning environments that include the student in the design of learning pathways
- creating additional job classifications for certified and classified staff beyond the traditional roles of teacher and instructional assistants, and compensating staff other than on a single salary schedule

The Kentucky Board of Education heard a first reading of the regulation at its August meeting. David Cook, director of the Division of Innovation and Partner Engagement, told the board that only districts can apply for the designation, and 70 percent of staff in a school would have to vote to support the innovation plan, or a district could create a new school using the innovation plan. Districts would have to reapply every five years, he said.

The regulation will receive public comments before

Kentucky Center for School Safety

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October 2012 (11)	• About 90 percent of Emience students would be the first in their family to go to college.
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The schedule was originally designed to use the two weeks for remediation and enrichment, but that's not often enough, Berry said.

"You can't wait nine weeks to intervene with a kid in instruction," he said. "We're now trying to intervene within 24 hours."

Under the Eminence schedule, students take their core classes on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays for one hour and 15 minutes. On Tuesday and Thursdays, they have the opportunities for remediation and enrichment, including elective classes, for an hour and 43 minutes.

Instructional Supervisor Thom Coffee said students get as much or more time in their core classes as in a traditional schedule.

"But if they're struggling, they get crazy additional minutes because we'll pull them out for an intervention on Tuesdays or Thursdays, where instead of having 25 kids in math class, it's the math teacher and five kids who are struggling with that content," he said.

Christiansen has been very happy to have the intervention time. For instance, for the first half of her second period, she is able to provide one-on-one instruction to students who need extra help with reading.

"There's no way they can slip through the cracks," she said.

Christiansen said elective classes require higher-level thinking while giving students an opportunity to explore their interests.

Lively said the change in the schedule concerned her at first, but then she saw the benefits. In previous years, about 10 percent of her class might be bored at any given time because they already understood what she had taught while she worked with students who were taking longer to get it.

Now those students have a reason to not only reach mastery of material but to exceed it so they can become Bellamine students.

On Tuesdays and Thursdays, 35 Eminence students travel by bus to Bellamine for English 101 and Human Geography classes.

Berry said students can earn 13 college credit hours the first year and 16 credit hours their second year in the program – and pay nothing. Eminence pays \$100 per credit hour, which ends up being \$1,300 per year per student plus books and transportation, he said. Bellamine is reducing what it regularly charges for credit hours by 92 percent, Berry said.

Berry said the partnership with Bellamine has increased the number of students interested in going to college and caused more to take classes to prepare them for the ACT than in the past.

To participate, students must achieve an 18 in English, 19 in math and 20 in reading on the ACT. Berry said 70 percent of the freshman class took the ACT in June to see how close they were to being eligible. Traditionally, freshmen do not take the ACT.

Once the board approves the regulation, it must go through a regulatory review process. Short of any problems during those reviews, the regulation should go into effect in late November or early December, Cook said. Districts would be able to apply for District of Innovation status beginning in January, he said, although that date could be pushed back if legislators want changes to the regulation.

Cook said districts and schools will have to do more than change how they deliver content. He noted that giving every student a iPad, for instance, is not innovation unless a school changes the way it delivers instruction with the devices. Neither is changing schedules from a traditional class schedule to block or trimester scheduling.

"Does it literally do something differently, not just provide a different mechanism?" he said.

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"The college culture mindset shift has been crazy because there's a very real goal on the table of going to school," he said. "The future question will be do we let everybody go, can we continue to pay for everybody? How does that look in the future? I can't tell you."

To pay for the college classes and the 1:1 computer initiative, Berry cut two-and-a-half positions from the district's budget through attrition and worked out a deal with Apple on the computers.

"It is a sustainable model," he said.

But he's not done yet. Berry said he wants to see learning personalized for every student. "It's a dream. It's not there yet. It's not K-12 every day," he said. "But we're sure trying."



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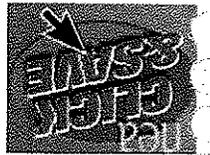
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Education leaders say the best way to improve schools is to let leaders

innovate

9/26/2012

Education leaders say the best way to improve schools is to let leaders innovate

It's not necessarily more money that will help Kentucky schools better prepare students for their careers or college — it's how the schools use the money and creatively reinforce success to students. That's the message education leaders came away with from a policy roundtable in Louisville on Tuesday.

The Kentucky Leads the Nation group gathered the education experts to hold the discussion to talk about ways to improve education amongst the Kentucky Public Schools. The roundtable was held at the J.B. Atkinson Academy for Excellence in Teaching and Learning — an elementary school in the Portland neighborhood of Louisville.

The school brings in University of Louisville students to interact with the elementary school students and teachers stress the importance of going to college. Another school that was highlighted in the meeting was Eminence Independent School District in Henry County.

As Pure Politics innovative approaches to learning with their students using MacBook computers and the school busing students to Bellarmine University on a bus with wifi internet. And the state's Director of Innovation David Cook cited Eminence Superintendent Buddy Berry as a model for other districts.

Kentucky Education Commissioner Terry Holliday said the needs in education don't just stop in the classroom.

Kentucky's scores have been improving, but even earlier this summer at the Kentucky Chamber of Commerce business summit, the state received a "bad" report card":http://mycn2.com/politics/low-grades-for-kentucky-s-higher-education-system-disappointing-but-eye-opening-leaders-say when it came to education.

But Alicia Sells of Kentucky Leads the Nation says that has led to an attitude among people in the state that isn't exactly true.

"We do have a self-defeating attitude in the state that we are at the bottom of educational attainment, but we're not. And we all know that" (at :38).

Sells gave the examples of 1990 education reforms and the new core curriculum standards Kentucky schools put into place starting last year.

Kentucky Leads the Nation will hold a summit to help school districts determine what it takes to innovate on October 26-27.

cn|2 Politics

## Bellarmine Partnership with Eminence Independent Schools Supports First Generation Students

[http://www.bellarmine.edu/news/more.asp?event\\_id=848](http://www.bellarmine.edu/news/more.asp?event_id=848)

May 1, 2012

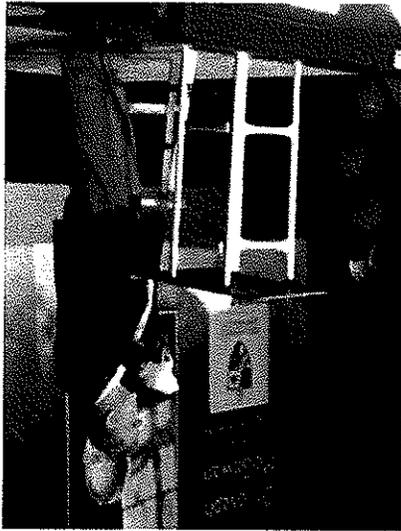
Beginning this fall, qualified high school juniors and seniors from Eminence High School in Henry County, Ky., will travel to Bellarmine two days a week to experience campus life and earn college credit.

The new partnership between Bellarmine and Eminence Independent Schools includes Apple laptops and a WiFi-equipped bus provided by the school system. Bellarmine is providing reduced tuition to the students, who will be able to earn up to 29 hours of college credit through the program if they participate for two full years.

Eminence students consistently perform well in the classroom, with the school district ranking among Kentucky's top 10 districts for high ACT scores.

This past year, 64 percent of Eminence students qualified for free and reduced lunch, and 90 percent were from families where previous generations had not completed college. Through Bellarmine's Pioneer Scholars Program, the university is equipped to help these students develop the skills they need to be successful in college. About 40 percent of Bellarmine students are first generation college students.

**Bellarmine's president, Dr. Joseph J. McGowan, praises Eminence students at the announcement.**



"Today is a monumental day in the history of Eminence Independence Schools," said Buddy Berry, the school system's superintendent. "It is our hope that our students and staff will lead the way in reinventing schools as we know it. Bellarmine's commitment in sharing our vision is inspiring and we are extremely grateful for all their help."

Berry is a graduate of Bellarmine's Annsley Frazier Thornton School of Education.

"Bellarmine University is excited for this opportunity to partner with Eminence Independent Schools to provide groundbreaking programs for talented high school students," said Bellarmine's president, Dr. Joseph J. McGowan. "Through this early exposure to college life, these students will participate in extraordinary classroom experiences, college orientation and campus culture. We can't wait to welcome these talented students to our campus, and we appreciate very much the collaborative work of all the great educators in the Eminence Independent School District."

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**Eminence Superintendent  
Buddy Berry describes  
the new partnership.**

Reinvention of Ky. school includes free computers, college classes

<http://www.whas11.com/community/Reinvention-of-Ky-school-includes-free-computers-college-classes-149748425.html>

by Joe Arnold, WHAS11.com, Posted on May 1, 2012 at 7:16 PM

Updated Tuesday, May 1 at 7:23 PM

EMINENCE, Ky (WHAS11) -- With an aim to be the most innovative school in Kentucky, if not America, the Eminence Independent School District in Henry County announced its reinvention on Tuesday, complete with Apple MacBook Pro computers for every high school student and an express ticket to college.

"We work at the Disneyworld of schools," said Eminence Independent School District Superintendent Buddy Berry. "It is a treat to show up every day."

The program is called School on F.I.R.E (Framework of Innovation for Reinventing Education).

Starting this fall, the 600 students K through 12 will attend core classes just three days a week. The other two days will be set aside for what the district calls "interventions, connections and enrichment," including free college classes at Bellarmine University in Louisville.

"What is this distinction between high school and college? It really is artificial," said Dr. Joseph McGowan, Bellarmine University President. "It has to do with how much time does it take to master a certain amount of content and then go into another area, master a certain amount of content. Well, how about we blur those lines a little bit more and focus on outcomes and see what happens and move them along?"

By the time Eminence students graduate, some will already be one-third of the way through college.

"I have four children myself, that's \$160,000 potential dollars that it's going to save me as a parent let alone as an administrator," Berry said. "We graduate about 35 kids a year, it's a \$1.7 million opportunity for every single graduating class at Eminence High School."

"(It's) our next step into the future as a school and the next step for Kentucky," said Cadence Payne, Eminence High School Senior.

The students will board a wi-fi bus on the fast track to college.

"I really think our students are ready," said Nikki Gamble, an Eminence High School Senior. "They challenge everything, they push boundaries and they really just want to grow in their own right and grow as a school and be ready for the real world."

"It's going to be intimidating as a sophomore walking on a college campus but I plan on taking full advantage of it though," said Trevor Payton, an Eminence High Freshman.

The program is seen as unique in the United States.

"None like this one that they can maintain their senior status, go to prom, play soccer, do the kinds of things that seniors need to do but get the academic advancement that they need from Bellarmine," said Doris Tegar, Bellarmine University Provost.

The transformation is also happening within Eminence Independent School, itself.

"The real change factor that is going on right now is teachers are learning to take hold of the power of the student voice," Berry explained.

When faculty seemed intimidated by the new computer technology to be formally added in the fall, Superintendent Buddy Berry called in a secret weapon... his third grade daughter.

"I got the computer from my Daddy, and just started making up one on my own," said Brooke Berry.

For three hours during a teachers' professional development day, the nine year old surprise instructor fielded teachers' questions how to use an Apple program.

"All these different cool things to teach the teachers what to do and how to do keynote," Brooke recalled.

Is it hard to use?

"Not too hard," she said.

Is it hard for an adult to use?

"If it's the first time, maybe a little bit," Brooke acknowledged.

Her father said the third grader's computer instruction was "a turning point in our school."

When the school year started, Berry estimates only a handful of teachers were proficient with the Apple MacBook Pro computer.

Now?

"We're at 85 percent," Berry beamed. "Those are teachers who many of them were not emailing five years ago. And now they are embedding high end technology into everyday lessons."

Student progress is also undergoing a digital transformation.

"Every kid will be tracked with the standards they have mastered from kindergarten all the way to 12th grade," Berry said. "So we'll know, it will almost be like a doctor diagnosing what's wrong or what's going well and we'll go and prescribe exactly what that kid needs to match the next level of mastery."

While the innovations resemble a charter school, Berry says they are being accomplished within the confines of Kentucky state law, which does not allow charter schools.

"Charter schools tend to happen for a select population," Berry said. "This is for every kid who walks through the door of Eminence schools."

## From the outside in

Emminence innovations more than surface-deep  
October - 2011

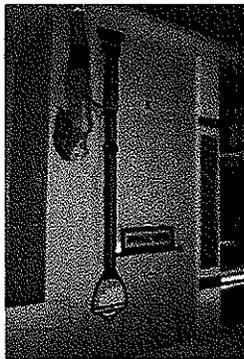
By Madeynn Coldiron  
Staff Writer

Elementary-grade students at Eminence School don't have to leave the building to walk down Main Street.

The elementary hallways have undergone a unique renovation modeled after a real town, complete with tree-lined streets, a park and storefronts. Much of the "town" is in the form of realistic and detailed hallway murals. Each teacher has a different storefront – pet shop, flower shop, restaurant – with an awning over the door, painted-on windows and actual wood siding and shutters on the walls.

"It's amazing. It's more homey for the kids," said Eminence High School senior Alexis Lentini, an elementary mentor whose little brother, she added, "absolutely loves it."

PHOTO: Abigail Philpot looks up at the lamppost that points the way down "Main Street" – an elementary hallway at Eminence Elementary School designed to resemble a city street.



The project architect, Studio Kremer, Inc., turned to the same firm that created the Great Wolf Lodge in Cincinnati and worked on exhibits for the Louisville Zoo for the hallway design.

The board signed off on the plans, but Chairwoman Brenda Chism said she was still surprised when it was unveiled to the public during an open house.

"We knew what was coming but I was so shocked at how great it turned out – all the little details I would not have thought about," she said. "I think the students felt they were coming into a new atmosphere – they were excited to be a part of it."

Chism wasn't the only person who was excited. The open house drew a crowd of 825 residents of the small town to view the changes.

"It was 25 minutes of shoulder-to-shoulder people," Superintendent Buddy Berry said.

The \$280,000 overhaul of the building began last year with work on the hallways, renovation of common spaces and upgrade of rest rooms, along with paint, new flooring, sound system and energy-efficient lighting for the gym. The latter, done with the help of the local school energy manager, will pay for itself within months. And while Berry said the novel hallways cost 25-30 percent more than routine renovation would have cost, the district saved an estimated 30 percent on the overall project by acting as its own general contractor and doing some of the work in-house.

The prior year, the building, parts of which date back to the 1930s, got a new roof, new windows and new HVAC system. The cafeteria is up next.

## Symbolic

What the district calls Innovation Renovation goes deeper than building improvements.

"To renovate the building was one thing – it looks fantastic, but that really doesn't mean anything if the instruction on the inside of it isn't just as special as the outside," Berry said. "I feel like the hall kind of summarizes and captures what we're doing in the classroom."

The elementary school has seen a 14 percent enrollment gain – and that was before the public saw the physical renovations, Berry pointed out.

"I think the growth was from the renovation inside the classroom," he said. "That would not have happened without our board. Different is hard to do, and what we did there is very, very different."

The instructional changes began several years ago, became focused last year and are continuing this year. A similar plan is in the works for the high school and middle school.

The district hired an instructional supervisor with federal edjobs money. Teachers were trained systematically, in-house, last year and during this summer. "We really tried to change the mindset and how we taught. How to teach rather than what is the focus," Berry said.

Kinderergarten teacher Jennifer McMillian said she doesn't view the changes as radical. "They put a vocabulary term to what we had always been doing," she said.

Principal Michael Doran said teachers were stakeholders in all the changes, so "There was zero resistance to anything." The 280-student preschool through fourth grade school uses a three-pronged approach to its instructional innovations:

• Mindset of Mastery, which encompasses standards-based grading, flexible grouping of skills regardless of grades, interventions and enrichment, and student data tracking.

• College and career readiness, including certificates of mastery and panel reviews for promotion, in which fourth graders (along with sixth, eighth and 12th graders) make their case for why they should be promoted. The mastery certificates also require community service, good behavior and attendance.

• Surprise and delight – borrowed from an Apple Inc. byword – is defined by student engagement, customer service, room parent program, after-school enrichment and random acts of “surprise and delight.”

The district as a whole also has a push for what Berry called the X-Factor, aimed at creating experiences for students to be successful in college and careers, he said.

The school board itself is part of the innovations, beyond the approval process. It has begun using KSBA’s Advancing Student Achievement to Proficiency program and improved communication with the administration, school councils and the community.

At their meetings, board members watch three-minute videos showcasing Eminence teachers using instructional practices that they paid for or approved.

“The board has taken so much ownership because they’re seeing what they paid for,” Berry said.

